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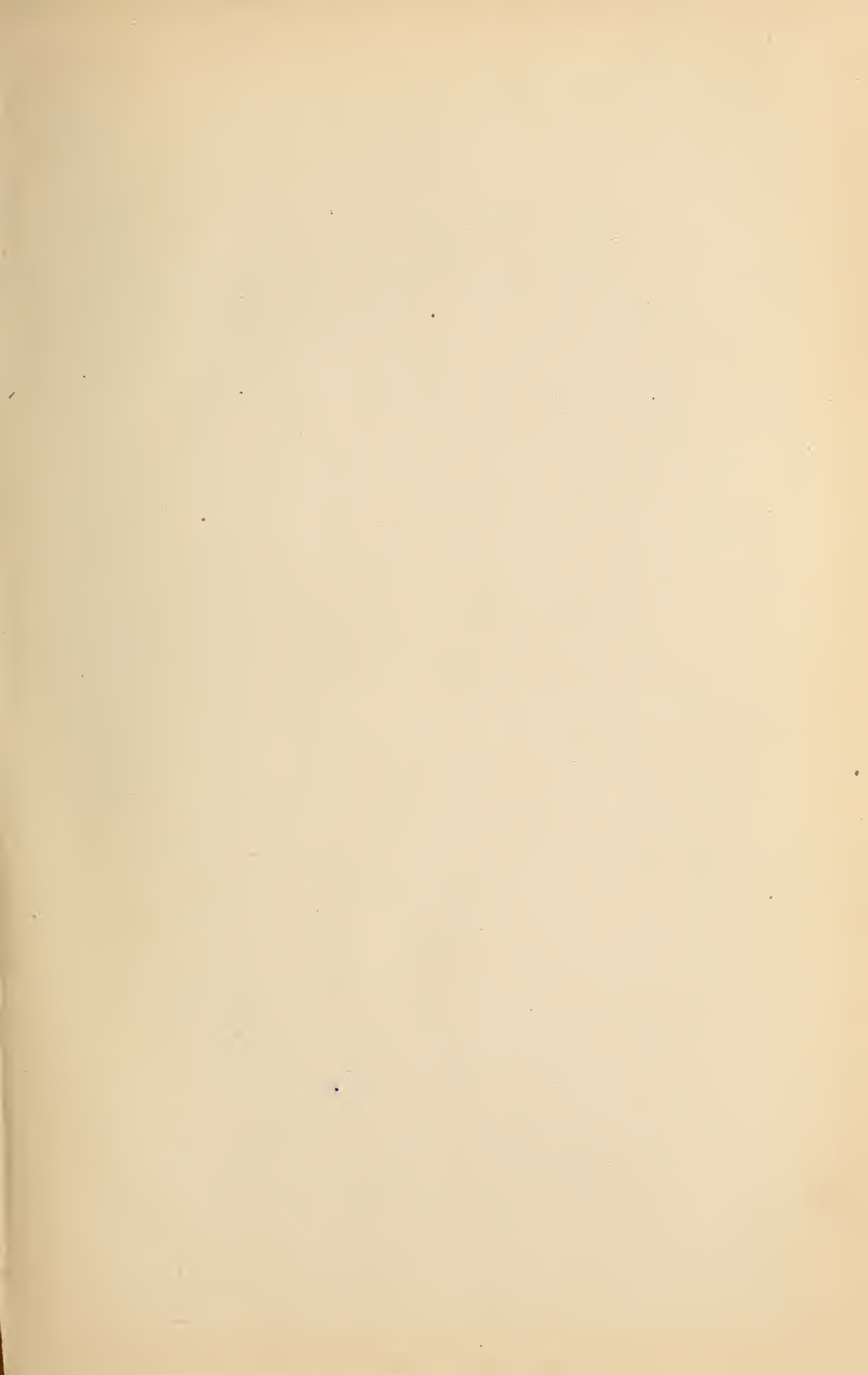
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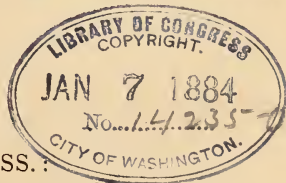
LIFE AND THOUGHTS

OF

EDEN B. FOSTER, D. D.

*CONSISTING OF A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, EULOGIES,
AND SELECTIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS.*

Edited by his Son.

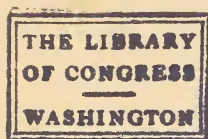


LOWELL, MASS.:

PUBLISHED BY GEORGE M. ELLIOTT.

1883.

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Vox Populi Press :
Huse, Goodwin & Co.,
Lowell, Mass.

Dedication.

TO
THE FOUR CHURCHES OF CHRIST
WHOM
Eden Burroughs Foster
SERVED IN HIS LIFE,
AND WHOSE
Love and Coöperation
DID SO MUCH TO MAKE
HIS FORTY YEARS IN THE MINISTRY
HAPPY AND EFFICIENT,
THIS VOLUME
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED
BY HIS SON.

PREFACE.

THIS book originated in a widespread desire among Dr. Foster's friends and former parishioners, to have a mental photograph of one loved and revered. The controlling aim on its every page has therefore been to make a fitting memorial. The John-street Church, of Lowell, with which more than half of Dr. Foster's forty years in the ministry were spent, wishing for some memento of their beloved pastor, concluded to assist in the publication of this book, rather than to place a marble tablet on the walls of their house of worship. They regarded that which should reproduce the inner life of their departed teacher, as the most becoming tribute to his memory, and one which would bring the most comfort to themselves. It was with this feeling that they appointed a Committee of Publication to assume financial charge of the work. A desire to represent Dr. Foster's methods and mental peculiarities, in their large variety, has governed the selection of addresses and sermons found in this volume. These are inserted primarily from their biographical interest.

At the same time it has been felt that this book might be made, and should be made, of practical value to pastors and churches who had no personal acquaintance with him it commemorates. Dr. Foster's thought took a wide range, and he was wont to express himself clearly and forcibly on a great number of topics. His experiences, as a clergyman, pertained to city and country, to times of peace and times of war, to periods of political strife and national discussion. He was an eminently cautious, wise, and far-seeing man. He was one whose sym-
-

ties were keenly enlisted in many directions. In consequence, his utterances, as recorded here, on ministerial responsibilities and methods, on the Christian life, on character, on national affairs, on literature, biography, history, education, theological thought, and many other themes, will, it is believed, prove suggestive and stimulating to those to whom this volume can have no value as a memorial.

The editor of this work desires to express his grateful acknowledgments to the Publishing Committee appointed by the John-street Church, Rev. H. T. Rose and Messrs. S. G. Bailey, J. S. Colby, G. M. Elliott, G. C. Osgood, R. L. Read, J. L. Sargent, G. H. Stevens, A. K. Whitcomb, and A. B. Woodworth; and especially to Messrs. George M. Elliott, treasurer, and John S. Colby, secretary, on whom the chief burdens of conducting the business have fallen; to the ten gentlemen who became financially responsible for the book; to the friends who contributed appreciative letters of reminiscence; to the two clergymen whose eulogies form a marked feature of the volume; to his mother and sister, whose assistance in editing the volume has been invaluable; and to the many whose interest and substantial aid have made this volume possible.

It may be added, that should sufficient encouragement be received, it is in contemplation to issue in one or more volumes, some of those sermons which Dr. Foster preached in connected courses, on which he put his best work, and which excited special interest among his hearers.

ADDISON P. FOSTER.

JERSEY CITY, N. J.

CONTENTS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

Why This Life is Written PAGE 9

II. PARENTAGE, BIRTH, AND BOYHOOD, 1813-31.

His Birth-place — Parents — Richard Foster — Mrs. Irene B. Foster — Rev. Eden Burroughs, D. D. — Brothers and Sister — Consecrated to the Ministry — Boyhood — At School — Social Enjoyments — Debating Club — Life on the Farm — Selling Cattle — Fishing and Hunting — Breaking Roads in Winter — Letter from Rev. Davis Foster — Letter from Rev. R. Baxter Foster — Letter from Rev. Amos Foster PAGE 10-25

III. AS STUDENT AND TEACHER, 1831-40.

At Kimball Union Academy — Conversion and Profession of Faith — Preparation for College — Scholarship — Sickness in Dartmouth College — Football — Letter from Pres. S. C. Bartlett, D. D. — Walking Home — Teaching in Sabbath School — Boarding Himself — In Family of Rev. Amos Foster — Letter advising him not to enter the Ministry — Address on Temperance — College Friendships — A Moving Sermon — Everett's Orations — Graduation — Letter from Hon. James Barrett on his Life in College — Address at Graduation — Teaching at Pembroke and Concord, N. H. — Learning to Sing — At Andover Theological Seminary — Engaged to be Married — Again at Pembroke — Married PAGE 25-40

IV. PASTORATE AT HENNIKER, N. H., 1841-47.

A Candidate — Ordained and Installed — Description of Henniker — Birth of Children — Letter from Mrs. Horace Childs — Exchanges at Pembroke — Love for Family — Love for Souls — Training of Children — Anxiety for Brothers — Revival at Concord — At Saratoga Springs — Delegate to General Assembly — Views on Slavery — Drs. Robert and William Breckenridge — Responsibilities of Ministry — Report on his Church — Resigning Pastorate PAGE 40-54

V. PASTORATE AT PELHAM, N. H., 1847-53.

Ministerial Credentials — Adrift — Anxieties — Candidate at Pelham, N. H. — Settlement — Description of Pelham — Old Church Edifice — Salary — Interest in Family — Books Desired — Birth and Death of Children — Call to Lawrence, Mass. — Call to Lowell, Mass. — Letter from Rev. Augustus Berry PAGE 54-64

VI. FIRST PASTORATE IN LOWELL, MASS., 1853-61.

How He Came to Go to Lowell — Description of Lowell — John-street Church — Labors in the Ministry — Extra-parochial Work — Newspaper Articles — Temperance Sermon — Congregational Churches and Pastors

in Lowell — Antislavery Agitation — Kansas Troubles — Assault on Sumner — John Brown's Raid — Pastoral Work — Love of his People — Their Moral Support — Calls from Other Churches — Call to Northampton, Mass. — To Columbus, O. — Revival at John-street Church — Birth and Death of a Son — Devotion to his Children — Advice to a Daughter — Biographical Reading — Vacation — Beauties of Western Massachusetts — Rusk — Rev. Bennett Tyler, D. D. — Loneliness — Letter to a Little Daughter — Address at Dartmouth College — Labors in Sermon-writing — Reviewing Life — Autumn — College Life — Election of Lincoln — Forebodings of Civil War — Accident at Pemberton Mills — Ill Health — Pen Paralysis — Leaving Lowell PAGE 64-102

VII. PASTORATE IN WEST SPRINGFIELD, MASS., 1861-66.

City and Country Pastorates — Made Doctor of Divinity — Installed at West Springfield — Cordial Reception — Joy in his New Home — Happiness of Old Age — Ministerial Labors — Sermons to Young Men — A Call to the Ministry — Memories of John-street Church — Letter to a Deacon — The Civil War — Influence in Procuring Enlistments — Biographies of Soldiers — Dislocation of the Arm — Extemporaneous Preaching — Gift from his People — Lectures at Teachers' Institutes — Revival — Themes of Sermons in Revival — Exhaustion — At Saratoga — Revivalists — Commencement at Dartmouth College — Council at Washington, D. C. — Gardening — Pear-culture — Criticism of Preaching — Biographies of Christian Women — Relations of Father and Daughter — Trials of Life — Loneliness — Influence of Learning — Interest in his Son — Objects in Life — Fable of Skouri — Death of his Eldest Daughter — Leaves West Springfield — Letter from J. Newton Bagg, Esq. PAGE 102-142

VIII. SECOND PASTORATE IN LOWELL, MASS., 1866-78.

Returning to a Former Pastorate — His Son Settled beside Him — Death of his Father — Fishing at York, Me. — Anxiety for his Children — Impaired Health — A Wedding Party — A New Home — Work on Sermons — Convention of Y. M. C. A. — Temperance in Massachusetts — Rev. Mr. Earle's Evangelistic Labors — Scenery at York, Me. — Fishing — An Eclipse and a Rainbow — Three Baccalaureate Sermons — Illness in Early Life — Outside Work — Letter to Saratoga — White Mountain Experiences — His Garden — Ministerial Association — Subjects of Sermons — Desirable Books to Read — A Minister's Responsibility — A Minister's Difficulties — Church Repairs — Changes in the Pastorate — Taine's English Literature — Estimate of Beecher — Revival — In the White Mountains — The Theatre — Miss Smiley's Meetings — Modern Skepticism — A Thanksgiving Remembrance — A Pastor's Letter — The Eminent Dead — Correspondence on Charles Sumner — Unable to Preach — A Six Months' Vacation — East Burke, Vt. — Law of Heredity — Description of a Brook; of a Sunrise — Mountain Scenery — Reading in Vacation — Rangeley Lakes — Preaching in Vacation — Verne, Morris, and Hedge — An Associate Pastor — Dean Alford — Immorality of Infidels — A Year of Rest — Studying at Home — Labor and Capital — Love for Family and Church — Godly Men — Jersey City — Prayer Meetings — Relations of New York and New England — Interest in Newspapers — Uses of Affliction — Religious Reading — Love for his Daughter — Novel Reading — Letter from a Parishioner on his Singleness of Aim in the Pastorate — Resigning the Pastorate — Pastor Emeritus — Letter from Hon. George Stevens in Review of This Period PAGE 142-205

IX. AS PASTOR EMERITUS, AT LOWELL, MASS., 1878-82.

Unable to Preach at All — Preparing Works for the Press — Cessation of Correspondence — Theological Ruts — Philosophical Reading — Anxieties about the Future — At the Seashore — Meeting of American Board — President Garfield and Other Presidents — Woman — Insincerity in the Pulpit — Ability of the Evangelical Ministry — Phillips Brooks — Garden at Lowell — Reminiscences — Liberalism — Hon. Thomas Corwin — Religious Biographies — Evils in the Country — Assassination of Garfield — Transcendentalism — Love among the Puritans — Sabbath-school Superintendent — Letter of Consolation — Relations to Associate Pastor —

Letter from Rev. J. B. Seabury — His Physicians — Last Sickness — Kindness of his People — Last Hours, and Death PAGE 205-231

X. CHARACTERISTICS.

Literary Tastes — Habits of Reading — Criticism on Choate — List of Books to be Read — Newspaper Clippings — Letter Writing — Method of Sermonizing — Preaching Old Sermons — Rewriting Sermons — Amount of Work in the Ministry — His Illustrations and Unction — His Public Prayers — His Ideas of the Ministry — Interest in Politics; in Temperance; in Antislavery — Love for Young Men — His Emotion, Energy, Humility, Affectionate Nature, Charity, Piety — List of his Special Public Efforts — List of Published Sermons and Addresses PAGE 231-250

EULOGIES.

I. DR. STREET'S FUNERAL ADDRESS.

Prefatory Note Giving Account of Funeral Services — Different Kinds of Light — Light of Good Men — Dr. Foster's Early Home — Influence on Brothers — His Modesty, Earnestness, Piety, Laboriousness — His Style — His Humor — Aptness in Use of Illustration — A Personal Tribute. PAGE 251-261

II. DR. GREENE'S MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

Prefatory Note Giving Sabbath-school Memorial Service — Dr. Foster's Eloquence — His Courage — His Genius of Labor PAGE 262-271

DR. FOSTER'S SELECTED SERMONS AND ADDRESSES.

I. THE ELOQUENCE OF EXPIRING NATIONS.

Prefatory Note — Eloquence of Death — Supernatural Energy of Gifted Men at Death of Nations — Components of a Nation's Eloquence — Lack of Eloquence in Times of Prosperity — In Times of Despair the Eloquence of Regenerating Genius PAGE 271-275

II. THE DULL SCHOLAR.

Prefatory Note — 1. Educate through the Agency of the Senses — Use of the Eye in Learning — Patrick Henry — Lord Erskine — Dr. Channing — Daniel Webster — John and John Quincy Adams — 2. Educate through the Imagination — Characteristics and Dangers of the Age — 3. Educate according to Mental Peculiarities — Importance of a General Education — Arouse Dormant Faculties — Parent's Ignorance of his Child — Self-distrust — Sympathy of the Teacher — Possibilities of a Child Not Precocious PAGE 276-291

III. READING.

Prefatory Note — I. Classification of Books: A Selection Necessary — 1. Biblical and Theological — Value of the Bible — 2. Historical and Biographical — Interest of History; of Biography — 3. Poetical and Miscellaneous — Shakespeare — Novels — Newspapers and Reviews — Evil Literature — Ethics and Philosophy — Public Libraries — Books which have Influenced Eminent Men — II. Advantages of Reading: 1. Counteracts Influence of Mechanical Agencies — 2. Method of Mental Culture — Value of Reflection — Reading Secures Familiarity with Great Minds — Responsibility of the Press — 3. Adds a Charm to the Home — A Mental Discipline — Increases Sympathy — Home Influences — 4. Prepares for Old Age — The Occupation of Retirement — The Beauty of a Thoughtful Old Age, PAGE 292-312

IV. TEMPERANCE.

Prefatory Note — Moderate Drinking — The Rum-seller's Mistake — Relations of Temperance to Woman — Health as Affected by Alcohol — Practical Measures in Curing Intemperance — Prohibition — The Ruin of Intellect from Alcohol PAGE 313-326

V. SOURCES OF PULPIT POWER.

Prefatory Note — 1. A Believing Spirit — Excitements of the Age — Rationalistic Tendencies — Worldliness — 2. Consecutive Thought — Rules of Reasoning — The Forms of Truth — Freshness of Theology — Dr. Griffin's Park-street Lectures — 3. Independent Thought — Relation of Independent Thinkers — Dependence on Others' Thoughts — Correct Thinking — Danger of Eccentricity — Progress in Theology — 4. Simplicity of Style — No Literary Ambitions — Sensationalism — 5. Loyalty to Truth — The Ruling Motive — Faith in the Right — Patience — Sense of Responsibility, PAGE 327-349

VI. CHARLES SUMNER.

Prefatory Note — 1. His Integrity — Aims — High Principles — 2. His Scholarship — Interest in History and Literature — His Illustrations — A Practical Man — Influence in Destroying Slavery — 3. A Jurist — Knowledge of Constitutional and International Law — 4. A Popular Teacher — In European Society — The Lecture — 5. A Hero and Martyr — His Objects in Congress — Election — Assault by Brooks — Medical Treatment. 6. Source of His Attainments and Usefulness — His Youth — 7. His Divine Appointment PAGE 350-368

VII. REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1873.

Prefatory Note — 1. France — Fall of Napoleon III — Six Factions — The Commune — Lack of Faith — Disregard of the Sabbath — Religion in United States — 2. Italy — Historical Resume — A Religious War — Bible in Schools — 3. Spain — State Control of Schools — The Virginus — 4. Turkey — Christianization — 5. Death of Louis Agassiz and John Stuart Mill — Evil of Free Thinking PAGE 369-388

VIII. METHODS OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE.

Prefatory Note — Love for God: I. Reasons for it — II. How Maintained : 1. By Perseverance — 2. By Christian Fellowship — Conversation of Christians — 3. By a Holy Life — 4. By Prayer for the Spirit PAGE 389-402

IX. PEACE LIKE A RIVER.

Prefatory Note — I. Two Characteristics of the Peace of God: 1. Its Abundance — Doubts in the Religious Life — Last Days of the Righteous — 2. Its Mystery — Mystery of the Ocean — No Objection to Mystery — II. Methods of Obtaining Peace: 1. By Faith — 2. By Recognizing Personal Responsibilities — 3. By Piety PAGE 403-416

X. THE BIBLE AS AN EDUCATING POWER.

Prefatory Note — 1. The Bible Secures a Competence — Prosperity of England and United States — 2. The Bible Instructs and Exalts the Mind — Its Style — Its Supernatural Element — 3. The Bible Fits for Patriotic Duties — Its Revelations of Law, Freedom, Human Rights — Demands of Patriotism PAGE 417-430

XI. THE DEATH OF THE CHRISTIAN.

Prefatory Note — Interest in the Christian's Death-bed — I. Distressing Features: 1. Physical Pain — 2. Separation from Friends — 3. Sometimes Sudden and Unexpected — Can Sickness be Avoided? — 4. Sometimes Shrouded in Spiritual Darkness — II. Joyful Characteristics: 1. Closes the Conflict with Sin — 2. Brings Enlargement of Mind — 3. Removes Hindrances to Successful Action — 4. Introduces to the Blessedness of Heaven — Heaven, the Fellowship of Saints and Communion with Christ, PAGE 431-444

INDEX 445

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY REV. ADDISON P. FOSTER, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

I.—Introductory.

THE biography of a faithful pastor is not an exciting tale. Ordinarily the years pass in simple and quiet routine. The lives of most ministers are as much alike in their general outline, as the successive ranges of the Alleghanies, that lie in parallel lines across northern New Jersey. Why, then, attempt the biography of another minister, when so many have already been written? Because Doctor Foster was a man widely known and loved, and his many friends desire this Memorial for their personal gratification; because, further, it is believed that his life was exceptional,—not in its outline, but in its finish. He of whom we write was in many respects a model for imitation. There are many others whose names are more widely known, others of larger accomplishment; but none, we believe, of a higher ideal, of a fuller consecration, of greater faithfulness. He was a rare example of Christian manliness, of ministerial earnestness, of devotion to his family and friends. His external life may be like that of others, but the thoughts, emotions, and purposes that flowed through that life are so pure and beautiful as to be distinctive and worthy of record. And his life has one further element of unusual interest: it was a constant battle and a constant

triumph,—a battle with disease and despondency; a triumph of the soul within, sustained by a high and holy resolve, over the disabilities of an enfeebled body. In this his experience was like that of Richard Baxter.

It is proposed to make these “memorials of a quiet life” as far as possible autobiographical. Out of a large collection of letters, written in the utmost freedom to wife and children, to parents, brothers, sisters, and friends, copious extracts will be made. These will picture the inner life, which is the main thing to be brought to view, far better than any descriptions from the pen of another. In so doing, however, it is impossible to avoid many references to family friends and items of domestic concern, which in a biography differently planned, would be irrelevant, if not impertinent. It is trusted that such references will be pardoned, as essential to the preservation of the vitality of the quotations.

II.—Parentage, Birth, and Boyhood.

1813—1831.

EDEN BURROUGHS FOSTER was born May 26, 1813, in Hanover, N. H., in that part of the town known as the Centre. Hanover lies in the northern part of New Hampshire, on the Connecticut River. It rises abruptly from the river into high hills, which are cut here and there by deep ravines, and which, though generally topped with granite and exposing on their sides broad surfaces of slate, yet furnish on their flanks some admirable grazing farms. On the south side of the town lies Hanover Plain, a broad sandy expanse on which Dartmouth College is located. Five miles northward is Hanover Centre, a street of houses, with church and school-house, running north and south on a narrow, elongated plain. Near the eastern boundary of the town is Moose Mountain, a considerable elevation, extending six or eight miles, and, with its forest-clad summits, the principal feature in the landscape. Hanover was

founded in the latter part of the last century, mainly by a colony from Connecticut, whose chief purpose was to establish a school for Indian youth in what was then a wilderness. In 1813 it was far removed from the great centres, and then, as now, under the dominant influence of the college. It was a place of constant struggle for the necessities of life, and of consequent self-denial, but it was also a place of unusual intelligence and love of learning. In 1849, Mr. Foster prepared a list of those born in and around Hanover Centre who had entered a professional life. He was able to name of such seventy-nine, and of these thirty-five had received a college education.

Eden's parents were Richard and Irene Foster. His father, Richard, was born in Salisbury, N. H., and was the son of Richard and Sarah (Greeley) Foster, the latter being distantly related to Horace Greeley. After the father's death, his son Eden wrote of him as follows:—

“The family, of English origin, was originally located in Salisbury, Mass. At the age of twenty, Richard Foster removed to Hanover, N. H. His early opportunities of school instruction were small. Yet from childhood he was a quick and thorough scholar in all elementary branches, a lover of such books as were within his reach, a keen observer of events passing around him, and an original thinker. At the age of twenty-one he gave himself to the service of Christ. He then adopted the old Puritanic faith, both religious and political, and he adhered to those convictions to the end. He was a hater of tyranny in all its forms. He had a manly integrity without a stain; a consecration to Christ without a doubt; a benevolence which was self-sacrificing, and which never wearied. He lived in Hanover from the age of twenty to the age of sixty-five, a father in the church, a friend of schools, consulted widely for his soundness of judgment, trusted of the town in public affairs, honored of all for his unswerving uprightness; ready for every good work, energetic in whatever he undertook, giving more than a tithe of all that he possessed for Christian charities and for public order.

“He commenced his life on a farm, which was under a heavy incumbrance of debt. He redeemed it from its liabilities only by severest retrenchment, and by persevering, wearing toil. He was crippled in one of his hips at the age of twenty, by

the assault upon him of a drunken neighbor, who in the insanity of his passion, awakened by drink, came near murdering his own wife, and then turned his vengeance upon the young man who sought to rescue her life. Disabled by this life-long lameness, he never relaxed the most diligent and even energetic manual toil for fifty years. At last entirely crippled, so that for ten years he could not walk ten rods at a time, and often subjected to acute neuralgic pains, he maintained a perfect patience, and still kept up his familiarity with books, and with public events of current interest.

"Perhaps his most remarkable trait was his wise devotion to the welfare of his children. He early determined to give them a liberal education. To this all plans and all toils were made to bend. Anxieties were nothing, fatigues were nothing, surrender of comforts was nothing, if this desire could be consummated. All products of the farm, all increase of values springing from the growth of the country, all returns of a busy brain devising improvement, were consecrated to this end. Through all struggles and difficulties, his convictions of the value of an education never wavered. His parental love and his indomitable will held on. The farm was swept into this vortex. His plans for old age, for a day of sickness, for personal enjoyment, were all laid on this altar. His strength prematurely gave way. But no doubt clouded his mind, and no faltering marked his steps, as he pursued this one end.

"He had eleven children, ten sons and one daughter. Two of his sons he buried in infancy. He lived to see seven of them graduates from Dartmouth College; six of them entering the ministry, and one the profession of law. Three of these sons were officers in the Union army, and two of them were killed in battle."

To this it should be added, that the daughter received a liberal education, and for many years held prominent positions as an instructor of youth. In a similar strain, towards the close of Richard Foster's life, his son wrote to him as follows:—

"I adore and wonder and praise God when I think of the history of the past. I thank you once more for your love and care of me; for your forecasting plans and fatherly instructions; for your self-sacrifices on my behalf; for your energetic endurance, your persevering will, your magnanimous accomplishment. I have no words to express my admiration of many of the traits of character which you have exhibited in the past,

— the robust, vigorous, self-poised mind, the stainless integrity, the tireless industry, the unswerving adherence to principle, the self-denial, the surrender of inferior, time-serving, money-getting ends, for the intellectual culture and spiritual welfare of your children, and for the salvation of souls.

“I admire and wonder when I reflect upon the interpositions of the divine Providence in the history of our family. My parents lived a life of privation and exhausting toil. With their capabilities of mind and action, they might have schemed for wealth and material comfort, and have been successful. Their hopes, their ambitions, their loves, their plottings, were all swallowed up in the moral and mental progress of their children. The combination of qualities in the matrimonial union of the father and the mother, was remarkable. It was the stalwart strength and health of a working, out-door life; it was the energetic, unconquerable soul of a Puritan manhood, joined to the keen, disciplined intellect and the sensitive nerves of a studious life.”

The mother, of whom the son speaks thus in this last sentence, was Irene, daughter of Rev. Eden Burroughs, D. D., and Abigail (Davis) Burroughs. Dr. Burroughs was born in Stratford, Conn., Jan. 19, 1738, was graduated from Yale College in 1757, and received the honorary degree of doctor of divinity from Dartmouth College in 1806. He was ordained pastor in Killingly, Ct., in 1761, but accompanying his friend, President Wheelock, of Dartmouth College, to Hanover, he served as pastor at the Centre from 1773 till 1809, and after that date as pastor at Dartmouth College and Hartford, Vt., till he died. His death took place in 1813, in Hartford, Vt. For forty years a trustee of Dartmouth College, and a faithful and able minister, he was long a tower of strength in the region where he spent the most of his life. His daughter Irene was a remarkable woman. An obituary notice, written by her eldest son, speaks of her as follows:—

“The youngest child of her parents, the staff of their old age, the solace of all their cares, she was trained to the most affectionate and intimate communion with them in their studies and domestic plans, their views of men and life, their patriotic aspiration, and their religious hopes.

“The reading of solid books and conversation with thinking

minds early became the chief pastime of her life, and so continued unto the end. There were but two things which she loved more than her books,—her family and her Saviour. Neither hunger, nor sleep, nor rest, could draw her off from her reading, but at any moment, and with willing alacrity, she would leave her books to promote the comfort of her family, or to enjoy a season of prayer.

“Her mind possessed great activity and comprehensiveness. She could soar with Milton, in his sublimest thoughts; she could commune with Locke, in his deepest metaphysics; she could range with Edwards, in his widest generalizations; she could sympathize with Dwight, in his most practical enforcements,—but of all authors, Cowper, with his home sympathies, his rural delights, his quick and delicate sense of all gentle affections, his heart turning constantly to God, his steadfast and lofty maintenance of all principles of rectitude, was her favorite, as expressive of those tastes and thoughts which were most congenial to her own mind.

“Her heart was full of compassionate, generous emotion. No tale of grief could be repeated or read in her hearing, which did not touch the fountain of tears; no spectacle of distress could be witnessed by her, which did not elicit her instant and earnest efforts for its removal. In her devotion to the welfare of others, she was singularly oblivious of self, shrinking from no toil, refusing no sacrifice or self-denial, wearied by no vigils, troubled by no fatigues, if she might supply a want, or mitigate a sorrow, or relieve a pain. She was deeply interested for the prosperity of the church, for the welfare of the country, for the salvation of the heathen. No missionary or philanthropic effort failed to awaken her profoundest sympathy. No account of revivals, or of the conversion of the impenitent, was heard by her without deep thankfulness. Her piety controlled, and elevated, and beautified all her character. The Bible was her constant companion and guide, its precepts dwelling ever in her thoughts, its promises hid in her heart. She estimated all other books according to their conformity to, or departure from, this standard. Christ was her hope, His anointing blood her constant plea before the throne. ‘A sinner saved by grace’ was her self-estimate in life, her trembling, confiding, grateful trust when she passed into the Dark Valley and the gathering shadow.

“Her children rise up and call her blessed. Never will the memory of her affection and fidelity, her example, her instructive conversation, her prayer and holy teachings, shed like the

sunlight and the dew upon all their life, fade from their minds. Never will the power of her lovely and lofty faith cease to distil blessings upon her kindred and friends who shared her counsels, and who witnessed the light of her heavenward course."

A letter written to Mr. Foster's father about the same time with this notice, gives further information.

"Mother's character was one of rare and peculiar excellence. In her, the intellectual, the sensitive, and the imaginative were remarkably combined. Reason, affection, and fancy were her leading traits. Her mind was active, acute, thoughtful, penetrating, retentive. There was no subject of study which did not interest her, and to the understanding of which, if time and opportunity had been given her, she was not competent. Her knowledge was wide, her imagination buoyant and diversified, her love deep and strong.

"I think she had great versatility of talent, a prolific, exuberant genius, and, with her means of culture, one of the best disciplined and best informed minds I have ever seen. Toils and vigils were sweet to her, if accompanied by intelligence and thought. With her tastes for abstract thinking, with the deprivations of poverty endured by her and her husband through all their life, and with eight tearing boys turning the house upside-down every other hour, it is not to be thought strange if the most perfect order was sometimes impossible. But she had the power of self-oblivious toil; she had the faculty of labor and sacrifice and endurance, of earnest, persevering, tireless effort for the good of others, as much as any person I have ever known.

"I need not say that her piety was a quality which was never secondary or subordinate in her character. Conscience ruled over all; Faith was the basis of all her plans, and hopes, and joys. Her reverence for the Bible, for the Sabbath, for the institutions and doctrines of the Gospel, her devotion to Christ and His cause, were sentiments which grew with her growth and strengthened with her years. They accorded with the deductions of her reason, with the conscious wants of her soul, with the blessed experiences which had been vouchsafed to her of the power of religion. Her piety was humble, self-distrustful, unostentatious, to a very great degree, and probably as far as was possible in consistency with her decision of mind and her intense and quenchless zeal for the triumphs of truth and the salvation of souls. I believe that she would have perished

unblenchingly at the stake, to attest her love for Christ, and yet she would not have gone into the next room to make known any act of piety, but would rather have shrunk with the most anxious sensitiveness from the communication of her good deeds. Heaven was her home, and earth was to her a place of exile, and yet she was not tired of life. She desired to live, God willing, for her heart was bound up in her family, and it was a heart that loved with no stinted measure."

Mrs. Irene B. Foster was an omnivorous reader. While her sons were in college, they were accustomed to bring her books every week from the college library, until at last it was commonly reported that she had read every book in the library. She was wonderfully gifted in conversation, and it was the delight of the college professors to visit her humble dwelling and listen to her speech. It is said that on such occasions she would call in her boys, and while some would entertain the professors, others would help her, till presently tea would be ready, and the "feast of reason" begin again.

The names of the children born to Richard and Irene B. Foster, in the order of their birth, are as follows: Eden Burroughs; William (died in infancy); William Cowper (residing at the date of this writing, in infirm health, at Middletown, Ct.); Daniel (killed in the war for the Union); Sarah (residing at West Springfield, Mass.); Charles (fell in battle in the war for the Union); Jonathan Davis (died in infancy); Davis (pastor at Winchendon, Mass.); Roswell (residing at Independence, Iowa); Richard Baxter (preaching at Red Cliff, Col.); and Edward B. (died in early manhood). Of these adult sons, all but Edward received a college education; and of the seven thus educated, all but Charles entered the ministry.

Eden was born under circumstances of peculiar trial. Eight days before his birth, his mother lost her beloved mother, and, four days afterwards, her father. It is a notable fact, that the first event in the life of the new-born babe was that the father, taking the little one upon his hands, joined with the mother in a solemn consecration of the child to the service of the Lord and the work of the ministry.

Eden's boyhood was spent upon his father's farm. He was quick to learn, and from such parents received faithful instruction. When only four years old he read his Bible, and at a very early age he read aloud quite correctly, and was often appointed by his father to read at family prayers. He soon began to go to the district school near by, where for a part of the time he was taught by his uncle, Amos Foster, afterwards pastor at Canaan, N. H., Putney, Vt., Acworth, N. H., and Ludlow, Vt. The social attractions of Hanover Centre, at that time, were unusual. During certain seasons, social gatherings of the young people were held weekly, which it was his delight to attend. To these early days the following fragments refer,—the first written while he was in college, the second near the end of his life.

"I wish you could happen in, some of these pleasant evenings, when the young people of the Centre have their cheerful meetings for work, and chat, and social enjoyment, and especially when a few choice friends circle around the fireside for still freer, more intimate, and more endearing intercourse. On such occasions my thoughts have sometimes wandered away to your northern clime, to wonder what you were about, and whether you felt contented and happy, and to wish that you might be whisked away by some sprite or other from your daily employments, and introduced bodily among us. Then again have I marked the flaxen and ebon locks, the sunny brows, the bonny eyes, the blooming cheeks, the ruby lips, the dimpled chins, the sylph-like forms, the gentle tone, the kindly deeds, the sprightly movements, and once more have I been wrapped in reverie,—and thus have I soliloquized: Erelong how far and wide will these bright beings be dispersed! How checkered will be their fate! How will they employ the influence which such charms bestow? Unquestionably, in some instances, wisely and well; in others, it is to be feared, rashly and ill. Will these smooth, glossy ringlets be disheveled through business and care, and will these dark tresses be whitened by the frosty fingers of age? How long will these attractions remain? These brows will be clouded by sorrow, or perhaps by testy humors which now lie dormant; these eyes darkened by sickness, and perchance by self-indulgence and passion; these cheeks become wan and furrowed, and possibly destitute of their present temperate complexion;

these forms bowed and no longer symmetrical; these tones tremulous, or peradventure discordant; these deeds few and far between, and these movements tottering, or clumsy and slow. This beauty may be blighted by sudden disease, and snatched away by remorseless death. Will any one or more of this fair number be so wise, so self-denying, and so fortunate as to preserve the calm serenity, the innocent expression, the benevolent aspect, which her features now wear, the happy, good-natured echo of her tones, and the same obliging, friendly deeds, the same personal comeliness and activity? If there is such an one, her price is far above rubies."

"I recall the young men by whom my aspirations and intellect were kindled, and how for two long winters we met weekly in a young men's club, at different dwelling-houses, to read essays, to recite declamations, to debate great questions, which have been the themes of controversy with clubs, and colleges, and assemblies from time immemorial. It was a discipline to my mind and a stimulus to my rhetoric, as great as any which I found at Meriden, or Dartmouth, or Pembroke, or Concord, N. H.

"I recall the young ladies who awakened in my bosom sentiments of respect and admiration for all that was good, and beautiful, and gentle, and true; and when the old red school-house was standing forty paces from my father's door, when the mountain winds were raging and the snow was piling itself in pathless drifts, it was not an unusual thing for those gentle daughters of the families of the district (the district was two miles wide east and west, and one mile wide north and south), blockaded by storms, to spend the night at my father's house. With most of those I have named, have I sat through the howling blasts of the tempest. O, changing fancies of a youthful mind! I know not that these tender sentiments are what we call affection; but I do know that I look back to those to whom I refer with kind regards and proud esteem, and prayers for their welfare."

The home life, though one of labor, was also one of enjoyment. The farm was located less than half a mile east of the Centre, on a hill-side, under the shadow of Moose Mountain. It was a fertile farm, but great level patches of rock here and there bade defiance to the farmer's art. A large house, the upper stories unfinished, stood on a knoll at some distance

from the road. A good-sized and well-filled barn stood near the house, while at quite a distance was the well, from which water was drawn by a pail and a hooked pole, the latter to be raised hand over hand by a dead lift.

"Father and mother," wrote Mr. Foster afterwards, "gained their subsistence from a rocky farm, which was heavily mortgaged. Weary manual toil was their portion. No foreign fingers ever meddled in their cookery, no foreign domestic ever entered their door. Looking back in the ancestral line to kindred, many of whom had been characterized by thoughtful and beautiful piety, and some of whom, by intellectual culture and ministerial usefulness, they made it their earnest aim not to fall below the standard of those who had gone before. They had eight sons, full of energy and bounding life, not destitute of scholarly aspirations and hopes, and those sons, spite of the heavy hand of poverty pressing them down into silence and inaction, they resolved to train for an intellectual Christian life. I will not describe their struggles, sacrifices, and prayers, and the discouragements of their heart, as their great undertakings seemed likely sometimes to fail, while still Hope looked through the darkness to the sunshine beyond; I will not depict the labors and self-denials of those boys, as with unfaltering determination they pursued knowledge under difficulties, carrying on their studies in the night, in the rainy days, in the cold winters, in the intervals of work, while in plowing, and planting, and hoeing, and mowing, in all the varied toils of the farmer, during seed-time, summer, and harvest, they accomplished as much as most young men of their age.

"Who hewed the wood and drew the water? The well was fifteen rods from the house, and all the water that was used in the house was brought that distance. Morning, noon, and night did one or more of those young men take his two pails, one in either hand, and bring water for the mother; and on Mondays, with wash-tub between them, and pails swinging on both sides as ballast, would two of them bring a tenfold portion. Who hewed the wood? The father did not keep a yoke of oxen the year round, as he purchased his cattle in the spring and sold them in the fall. One serviceable horse, more strong than gay, was preserved as an heir-loom in the family, and sometimes, with whiffle-tree and chain, one son would go half a mile to the woods, and drag home a green tree, and the other sons would chop it, and then around the great old-fashioned

fireside, in the long winter's evening, the whole circle would enjoy their books, their conversation, their home-bred sports, while the howling storm raged without. Thus they hewed their wood and drew their water, and steadfastly pressed onward and upward towards higher acquisitions.

"I do not know that any one of those sons now regrets that in childhood and youth he was not aided by Irish domestics, nor waited upon by African slaves; I do not know that any one of them is ashamed of the painful steps by which he went up the pathway of knowledge, or of the humility of his early history."

In consequence of Mr. Richard Foster's lameness, he was unable to support his family and educate his children solely from the products of his farm. It was then long before the East had come to rely on the West for meat, and being an excellent judge of cattle, he was accustomed to buy and sell on commission for the Boston market. Gathering up his cattle from the surrounding towns, he would start out in his wagon with a son on foot, and drive his herd to Boston. This business did not assume any considerable proportions till Eden had left the home. The growing boy was not kept too closely at work. He had his days of recreation in fishing in Goose Pond, east of Moose Mountain, and in hunting on the mountain itself.

"The whole world of my childhood and youth," he subsequently wrote, "seems to me like a dream, a beautiful and dear imagination of the past, but with colors fugitive as the rainbow. I go to Hanover, I go out to the old Burroughs manse (or rather the site of it), I gaze off upon the 'Town Plot,' the forty acres, the home lot, the mountain pasture, the orchard, the barn, the bucket that hung by the well, the pathway worn by the cart-wheels, half a mile through the centre of the lot,—all is changed, changed, changed! Bowlders and trees and knolls and orchards and buildings and well-sweeps, cart-tracks and gate-posts and stone-walls, level grounds where we boys played ball, sheltered and shady nooks where we sat to read, side hills where we hoed the corn and mowed the grass, groves of trees where we found our firewood,—all are transformed. Obliteration, negation, desolation, excommunication, are written on everything around the old roof-tree. I remember going out

on 'Lord's Hill,' with Uncle Benjamin, to hunt partridges. I was a little timid boy. He was at home from Amherst College, and, eager hunter as he was, he shot two. He gave them to me to carry to my father's house, while he hunted for another. A stranger met me on the road; he stopped to dicker with me; with shining silver he tempted me; in my diffidence and ignorance I sold him the partridges for ten cents,—and the invalid at home lost the broth.

"I remember going out on a roving expedition, under the mountain, with a shot-gun. Rounding a point of woods in the Tenney pasture, I came direct upon a bear. He rose upon his hind feet, and for the space of three minutes we stood gazing at each other, as if, in some pre-existent state, we had been acquainted. Then the bear dropped and plunged into the woods, and, had it been at a later date, I should have meditated sadly upon the theories of Darwin and Spencer, and wondered why one of my own beautiful and affectionate relatives (going back to the jelly-fish ages) should leave me so unceremoniously to silence and loneliness."

It should be added, to complete this narrative, that on the impulse of the moment, Eden aimed his shot-gun at the bear, and attempted to shoot, but, fortunately, there was tow in the pan, and the gun missed fire. The bear, however, turned and fled up the mountain, and the young man, coming to his senses, followed so good an example, and ran in the other direction. To these days of toil and pleasure do the following delightful letters of reminiscence refer.

"I have very affectionate remembrances of the Moose Mountain spruces and haying seasons, of the Town Plot rocks and fences, and sheep and cattle, of the frequent and hot races after un-Rarey-fied horses in the forty acres, of the corn-plantings, July mowings, potato diggings of the home-lot, of fishing in Enfield Pond and Goose Pond, of the mud-dams and polliwigs and minnows of Mink Brook, of the oat threshings, grain winnowings, wood choppings, and snow driftings of the cold winters. Charles talks somewhat glibly of his pleasant experiences of juvenile days in the matter of 'conquering a peace,' or of having a peace conquered by the application of 'Solomon's panacea.' I cannot say that my remembrances of that sort are so delightful as his. I cannot say that my judgment of the domestic rod is so favorable as that of some men. But

time will bring the proof, and 'all's well that ends well'; at any rate it is better than if it ends poorly. I would not denounce the rod; it has done its duty; peace to its remains!

"I have many grateful and precious memories of 'auld lang syne' in the old unfinished house, of the intellectual and social and religious privileges, of the love and toil and watch and prayer of father and mother, of the incitements to duty and helps to nobleness, and sources of enjoyment known there far more than in many an elegant palace of wealth, far more than in many a king's pavilion. Thanks once more to the father still living; to her who rejoices in Heaven; to a beneficent God. May all those ardent souls who once abode there, with energies unbounded and plans as large, with hopes and fears, with self-denials and toils, with loves and quarrels, with reconciliations and generousities and magnanimities genuine and true, with dreams and projects outrunning the power of any accomplishment, with aspirations and prayers going up to Heaven, all meet at last where no partings come, where no disappointments are known. . . .

"I longed for the sight of Moose Mountain, of Lord's Hill, of Connecticut River, of the Green Mountains to the northwest, and Ascutney Mountain to the southwest. I longed for that bounding, gushing sense of life which I had as a boy, when, with ten oxen hitched to a sled, and five men and a dozen boys to drive the team, and shovel drifts, and holloa, and laugh, and push, and jump, and play, I used to go out in the morning after a storm, in the bright sunshine and the keen air, and, after a mighty toil and exploit, come home, along in the afternoon, tired as a Venetian galley-man.

Oh, for the days, the bonny days, of 'Auld Lang Syne'!
Oh, for the health, the bounding health, that once was mine!"

"My brother Eden," writes his brother Davis, "was gentle and considerate towards the younger members of the family, and we had the most perfect faith in him. In the little neighborhood debating societies, no one could throw such a flood of light on any subject as he. To my boyish mind, there was no room for further talk, after he had made one of his impassioned, exhaustive speeches. He was the first in the family to go to college, and to enter the profession of the ministry. His course was a perpetual incitement to the younger brothers in the family. We felt that his example was one that we could follow. And we knew that his advice came from a heart only desirous of helping and stimulating us to do the best that was possible.

"His home, after he had one of his own, was always open to his younger brothers, and we were sure of a warm welcome, and of unfailing sympathy and kindness in our struggle for an education, or in our work in the later years of our professional life. How much I owe to his love and sympathy, and how constantly I looked to him for counsel, I did not know till the wise, loyal, loving friend and brother passed into his reward."

Here is an appropriate place to introduce a letter from one of his younger brothers, Rev. R. Baxter Foster, in which reference is made to his early life.

"My brother Eden was the oldest, and I the youngest but one, of the nine children who grew up in my father's house. He entered college when I was six years old, and had been at Meriden Academy before that. After he graduated, he taught and studied theology, and then made a home of his own. So it cannot be said that we ever *lived* in the same family. I remember: (1) My brother's dignity, grace, and culture. I suppose it is nothing unusual for little boys to look up with great respect to older brothers who are in college; yet I am persuaded they do not often have as much ground for their admiration as I had. And I base this opinion upon what I have seen of men since. Let it not be supposed that Eden was haughty, or cold, or distant to his younger brothers. On the contrary, he was frank and loving, and I remember words of encouragement that he spoke to me before I was ten years old. But that tender grace, that quiet dignity, that exquisite polish of manner that distinguished him through life, were his when a youth. They were not the acquired veneering of fashion; they were the ingrain substance of his character. (2) His physical strength and activity. Our father was a true son of New Hampshire, broad-chested, five feet ten inches tall, he weighed two hundred and thirty pounds, and could do two days' work in one without minding it. Mother was a Burroughs, tall and slim and tough also, but with the toughness of finely tempered steel. Eden was nearer six feet tall, not heavily built, but as active and lithe as a panther. A single instance, imprinted on my memory, will illustrate his activity. My father had a fine high-spirited horse, which loved his freedom too well to be caught easily when loose. One day, father, and I think all the eight boys, were after this horse in the pasture called the Town Plot (so called because the town gave it to grandfather Burroughs when he was settled as the minister; I believe it

was the exact centre of the town of Hanover). We had cornered the horse with a line too close for him to break, when he jumped the fence and started at full speed down the road. Quick as thought, Eden, too, leaped the fence, striking the road a little behind the flying steed; but he actually ran past him, and stopped him. I have seen Eden and Cowper, the next brother, handle a load of hay with marvellous swiftness. (3) I remember the eloquence with which he spoke, when a young man. It was not my privilege to hear him preach many times in after years, but both in his declamations and in his remarks, as in prayer-meeting, he gave full promise, when in college, of the eminence he afterwards attained as a public speaker.

"When I met my brother in after years, it was always to receive a blessing from him. One instance I will relate. I heedlessly threw away many years of the best part of my life. At forty-five, with a large family, and without any property, I faced the question whether I ought then to take up the work to which my mother had consecrated me, which I had once accepted, but had, twenty years before, renounced, — the work of preaching the gospel. Others, in whom I had confidence, said, 'You ought to have been a minister, but it is now too late.' Eden, on the contrary, did not decide the question off-hand in that way, but with the tenderness of a father towards a son, gave me the tests which, in his opinion, constituted a call to preach, youth not being one of them; and, in short, led me, though with great hesitation and trembling, to enter the ministry. The Lord has blessed me beyond my expectation and beyond my deserts; but if my brother Eden had discouraged me, I had never been a minister."

We have referred to the fact that Eden studied for a while with his uncle, Amos Foster. Of this period in his life, the uncle writes as follows : —

"This oldest son, from his early childhood, was religiously impressed by the teachings of his parents, and especially by the prayers of his mother. During the period of his childhood and youth, he was not subject to any of those vicious habits which too often darken the character of the young. His reading, his early associates, as well as his family instruction, had a salutary influence in forming his moral character; and as he passed from the period of childhood to that of youth, not a blemish could be seen upon it. His aptness to learn was seen very early. When about the age of

nine years, he was a pupil of the writer in a winter district school. Not in a single instance was he known to disregard the rules of the school, and whenever called to recite his lessons, he did it without a mistake. A part of the fall of 1828 and the following winter he spent in Canaan, N. H., engaged in the study of Latin under the instruction of his uncle, Rev. Amos Foster. It was the commencement of his preparation for college. He made excellent progress in his studies, and he especially excelled in English composition, to which he paid considerable attention. His uncle, the pastor, held a weekly Bible-class, in which, besides other appropriate exercises, essays were read upon the characters of individuals noted in the Bible, and other subjects of interest. The young student read a number of articles of his own composition, which displayed uncommon ability, and were deeply interesting to the hearers. He could now have been but a little more than fifteen years old. It was a wonder to all who heard him that one so young should understand so well topics of the Bible, and be able to express his thoughts in language so interesting and impressive."

III.—As Student and Teacher.

1831—1840.

IN 1831, when eighteen years old, Mr. Foster entered Kimball Union Academy, at Meriden, N. H., to complete his preparations for college. While here, and in his first year, he was converted. As the place where he found the Lord, and where he began those life-long habits of absorption in study which were so delightful to him, this institution was always regarded by him with a warm affection. January 1, 1832, he united with the Congregational Church in Hanover Centre, twenty-five joining at the same time, among them the young lady who subsequently became his wife. In the fall of 1832 he entered Dartmouth College. It was, however, with an imperfect preparation. Probably from motives of economy he had remained at Meriden far too brief a time for the best results. He never ceased to regret this, as these words show.

"I have suffered all my life because I did not enter college with a complete fitting in the languages. I have a good knowl-

edge of the *belles-lettres*, and a great love of literature. I have, to a considerable extent, an acquaintance with history and biography and the moral sciences. I have, I hope, some capacity for so presenting truth as to interest and influence my fellow-men. But I shall never cease to mourn my classical deficiencies. I entered college, after the study of a year and a half, imperfectly fitted. I entered with an ardent, aspiring, hopeful mind. I studied intensely. After two terms, I was taken sick with typhoid fever, and lost entirely the thread of my freshman year. I dragged on through the sophomore year with the dead-weight of that lost term hanging to me, my courage gone, my scholarship sinking all the time. At the end of the sophomore year, I gave it up, convinced that I must lose a year, and spend a year of professed rest and idleness, partly in working on the farm, partly in teaching school, partly in brooding over my disappointments. I then entered the class one year behind my first, but I never recovered my sanguine hopes; I never recovered my original classical standing."

This estimate, however, taken by itself, would give an unjust impression as to Mr. Foster's early scholarship. His term of preparation was indeed brief and imperfect, yet it did not compare unfavorably in its results with similar work on the part of other students of that day. He laments his lack of classical culture, yet he stood so high in college as to be elected to the Phi Beta Kappa Society; and in after years he watched over the education of his children, and gave them such efficient aid at every stage of their progress as to prove that his early training was of no mean order. The sickness which is referred to in the extract just given, was a very serious matter. He returned to college after it with a feebleness and lack of energy which were noticed by his classmates. He did not seem like the same man. It is beyond doubt, that the sickness permanently impaired the strength of his constitution, and sowed the seeds of physical difficulties with which he was in constant conflict in after life.

When he first entered college, he had been a champion in some of the athletic sports of the students,—especially in foot-ball his energy and powerful frame gave him unusual prominence. In this leadership, however, he was effectually

stopped by the barbarity of a fellow-student, who deliberately had his boots prepared with iron soles, and then on the foot-ball ground kicked Mr. Foster with all his might upon his shin. The leg was nearly broken by the blow, and Mr. Foster was scarcely able to get to his room. He suffered from the injury for weeks, and was never able to play foot-ball again.

The following brief extracts from a letter by Rev. Samuel C. Bartlett, D. D., President of Dartmouth College, will be read in this connection with interest:—

“Dr. Foster was a member of my class in college during the larger part of our freshman year. During the time when we were classmates, though I was but a boy of fifteen, some years his junior, I learned to look upon his character and bearing with great respect and admiration, and I am sure that I only shared the common sentiment of the class. I perfectly remember his excellent recitations, freshman year, and my recollection is more distinct in regard to his recitations in the classics. While maintaining a general excellency of scholarship, so far as my memory serves me, he then exhibited also that uncommon command of language which characterized his later years, and which at that time was very marked. The neatness and often felicity of his renderings, as well as of his remarks in our class-meetings, have left a strong impression on my memory.”

While in college it was his practice to walk home every Saturday, and return to his studies on Monday. Of these walks he says:—

“I walked, when in college, six miles every Saturday and six miles every Monday, through the whole course. I was eighteen before I left the homestead and the fatiguing work of the farm; and most of my vacations, and six additional weeks of labor in every haying season, were spent in hard work till I was twenty-five years old. I think my muscles had a severe early discipline, and that my lungs in youth and early manhood took in large draughts of mountain air. A part of the time in college I was a pretty smart foot-ball player.

“The old hill, with the college standing in quiet gracefulness at its foot, brought back to me a thousand recollections, some of them pleasant, some of them mournful. Would that I could bring back those hours of youth, and that course of

study, in those loved halls of literature, even if I had to walk again twelve miles a week, and sometimes twenty-four, to secure the privilege.

"I am making this tour as a sort of farewell survey. I do not expect many times hereafter to renew the joy. Memories of by-gone years, scenes of my childhood, ye fill me with mingled delight and pain!"

His Sundays were spent at home and in the quiet worship of the little church at the Centre. Here he taught in the Sabbath-school, having a class of young ladies, among them the one who subsequently became his wife.

His years in college were spent in most straitened circumstances, and much of the time he boarded himself, living mainly on crackers, bread, milk, and cheese. This practice brought on a derangement of the system, which followed him through life. His health became permanently impaired, dyspepsia and kindred evils being induced.

"It is my firm belief," he said more than once, "that if I had never boarded myself an hour, I should have gained ten years of life which have now been lost through ill health and despondency."

It is impossible to recover a satisfactory picture of those college days. A few facts only stand out like upright pillars amid the ruins of an ancient temple. In the winter of 1833-34, he taught school at Putney, Vt., boarding in the house of his greatly loved uncle, Rev. Amos Foster. Of this, and a previous visit, he afterwards wrote: —

"I have recollections, not less grateful and profound, of your own family. The autumn and winter spent in Canaan, studying Latin, are vivid before me. My religious convictions were then deep and pungent and scriptural, founded on your own blessed instructions, and on the example of piety, intelligence, loveliness, and love which your household exhibited. Another winter spent in your family, when I taught school in Putney, made impressions on my mind and heart equally deep and permanent. Then I learned for the first time to acquire some self-possession in leading the thoughts and the prayers of school-house assemblies, and so to direct my conversation

as to lead anxious inquirers to Christ. I was then better able to appreciate your high qualities as a minister, your strong arguments as a preacher, your great kindness and that of Aunt Harriet to me. Then your children (the four oldest) were my playmates and companions, and I cherished for them a love which lasts through years of time, and will last through the years of eternity."

In 1834 he was evidently seriously meditating the choice of the ministry for his profession. A person whose name at one time was known throughout the land, heard of his intention, and sent him a letter of advice. This letter is a literary curiosity, and for its keen insight into some ministerial evils, and its quaint language, shall have insertion here.

THREE RIVERS, Jan. 10, 1834.

"*My Dear* —: Yours of the date of Dec. 4 reached me, and I now with pleasure render the attention to your very handsome letter, which it well deserves. Were I to judge of your literary acquirements by your letter, I should form the most pleasing idea of your scholarship.

"I admire the good sense of your parents in laying a foundation for the prosperity of their children in education and knowledge. I have abundantly experienced this benefit in my own family. Perhaps no man has ever been surrounded with greater evils and calamities, yet by the simple force of education I have been enabled to break the toils in which I was enclosed, 'to mount the tempest and direct the storm.' May you abundantly share the liberal benefits flowing from knowledge, but never encounter the bitter trials by which I obtained my knowledge.

"I will tell you I disapprove altogether of your turning your attention to the ministry, and I will give my reasons for so doing. In the first place, such a pursuit contracts the mind into the narrowest circle. It unavoidably shuts out many branches of information that are indispensable for making you eminent for useful knowledge. Moreover, when men hear you preach against vice and in support of virtue, they will at once say, 'It is his trade; by it he gets his bread,' and the filthy will be filthy still. Again, you must preach such doctrines as long custom has sanctioned in the place, let your own belief be what it may, or run the risk of losing your support. To advocate a doctrine you do not believe, or suppress what you do believe to be the truth, must be extremely revolt-

ing to an honest heart; yet you may be placed in such a situation as to be exposed to suffer poverty and distress, not only yourself, but likewise a wife and children, in case you advocate what you believe to be the truth. As a minister, you will find yourself a degraded, dependent being, without the proud sensation of independence and possessing liberty to act in conformity to your own view of rectitude. You are in the heyday and glow of youthful feelings,—look *only* on the bright side of this question. Age and experience will show you a thousand distressing considerations attending the pursuits of a clergyman, which you do not even dream of now. Should you reconcile your mind to go with the stream at all hazards, and make no opposition to errors of the most glaring nature, you might then expect to barely pass your life in indolence, and with a *very* moderate competency, and die unnoticed, leaving truth to take care of itself. Yet I do not believe you capable of submitting to such a selfish, inglorious career. However, much respect and attention are due from you to the advice of your excellent parents. I wish them to see this letter, and afterwards, when every argument bearing on this subject is taken into consideration, you will act accordingly, and you have my most cordial wishes for success, be your pursuits whatever they may.

“You will remember to present my compliments of respect and affection to your parents, and believe me to be, sincerely and affectionately, _____”

Happily this worldly-wise advice from one whose experiences had embittered him, was met by a large degree of consecration and faith in the younger man, and so was not followed.

It was during the college course, also, that Mr. Foster began to make public addresses. We have record of but one, of which he wrote in 1876 as follows:—

“The first written discourse I ever delivered before a meeting-house audience was just forty years ago next Fourth of July, on temperance. I am willing the last sermon I ever preach should be on temperance.”

His friendships in college were strong, and he early developed that warmth of affection which characterized him through life. For one of his classmates, Nathanael Wright Dewey, he had such love as David had for Jonathan; and as it was with

that memorable friendship of old, so here, death early broke the tie, and left the survivor permanently saddened. These are some of the words in which he refers to that friendship:—

“I once had a friend, my other heart, trusted, congenial, worthy of all my love. God took away from me that friend. It was my greatest early bereavement. It cost me paroxysms of tears and indescribable heart-pangs. I thought then, I think now, that that one dear association with a congenial mind, with whom I could talk over great principles of science, great rules of duty, great hopes of the future, great memories of the past, was worth far more to me than a dozen intimate friendships would have been.”

In a letter concerning the death of another classmate, Rev. R. N. Wright, he thus expresses himself:—

“I doubt not he is in heaven. I have shared in his counsels; I have partaken in his sympathies; I have joined my voice with his in the more public prayer and in the supplications of the solitary chamber; I have been instructed by his conversation and life; I was honored to call him friend. My heart is bereaved. Recollections of the past return vividly, impressively,—thoughts of mingled mournfulness and delight. Dewey is before me, grasping my hand, looking into my face with his earnest eyes, pouring out the thoughts of his rich mind in his liquid, musical tones of voice. My heart bleeds afresh. Those conversations with Wright and Dewey in the private room, those rambles on the hill-side and in the retired grove, those topics, so often and eagerly discussed, of classical study and religious interest, all return to my mind. Their impression is unfading. Oh, these beloved and honored classmates, ‘who are now with the dead, or rather with the immortal living, whose faces now shine as the stars and as the brightness of the firmament,’ come around me. Dewey, Wright, Lord, French, Griswold, Gibbs, Cooke, Brown, Chandler, Everett, have died in the Lord, and their works do follow them, their influence liveth forevermore.”

A letter to Wright Dewey, one of the earliest of Mr. Foster's now extant, gives us a glimpse of his college and home life. It shows his friendships, his high aims, his self-denying method of living, his desire for his brothers' education (a desire he

never lost), his activity in Christian work,* and his literary tastes. The letter is as follows:—

“DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, Dec. 7, 1836.

“*My best friend*,—Thanks to you for your letter, and thanks to the goose-quill that travelled through it and left those tracks. I read it twice within fifteen minutes after I opened it. May it be the precursor of a long and valuable series of true, warm-hearted, and clear-headed epistles betwixt you and me. Separations must take place, but if we love one another we shall spite old Terra and her progeny, holding frequent visitations, though mountains or seas may be between us. Nat gives good satisfaction in his school. R. has a singing-school at M., and another at the Centre. K. is teaching. M. stayed a night with me a week ago. He had good luck in his school and was in excellent spirits. P. has thirty scholars. The price of board at Lebanon is only fifteen shillings sixpence per week. Father can't patronize such moderate-minded men, so the boys are studying with me. We have a stove in our room, a bed in the one adjoining, and plenty of hulled corn, frozen milk, bread, and pudding stowed away in pans, bins, boxes, barrels, and bread-baskets. So we live by steam, learn by horse-power, work by the job, and ‘Go it, Jerry.’ The health of people in Hanover remains *in statu quo*. As to my own welfare, I eat sparingly, exercise abundantly, sleep soundly and briefly, read occasionally, study diligently, perceive quickly, retain easily, visit at the Centre frequently, am received gladly, and spend my time pleasantly. Do you expect any snow this winter? I am afraid I shall lose the pleasant sleigh-rides which lie so snugly ensconced in fancy's corner.

“Rev. Mr. Birkby lately, while discoursing on the effect of Christian example in the conversion of souls, was affected even to tears. It was overpowering to see the well-spring of feeling opened in a breast which is ruled by such a mighty mind. I was too much moved to look around, but a man more than ordinarily callous seated at my side, was unable to resist the touching eloquence which spoke from the heart, for he too wept. Why does such preaching, enforced not only by its own intrinsic excellence, but by such weight of persuasive authority, tenderness, and purity of soul, such comprehensiveness and acuteness of intellect, such grandeur of character, fail to melt the impenitent heart? In the Sabbath-school I have taken L.'s class and C.'s both under my care. The young ladies appear serious and attentive. I am making some innovations in the mode of instruction, in order, if possible, to create

a greater interest in the exercises. Oh, that my efforts might be guided by such a spirit of wisdom and devotion as to awaken these minds, which must exert such an influence in this world, and thrill with such keen emotions in the next, to a suitable understanding and realization of gospel truth! In this, as in other situations, I need your prayers.

"I have been reading some of Everett's orations. They may be styled politico-literary addresses. His main drift is to show the superiority of our political institutions, and the importance of intellectual cultivation. One oration contains the most masterly exposition of the source of our peculiar national greatness, I have ever seen. I think the excellence of Everett's writings consists in methodical argument, perspicuity of style, and fulness of historical illustration. He has the power of presenting a thought in all its aspects, without appearing prolix or tedious. His views are sometimes novel, always sensible, but rarely striking in point of originality and depth. He appears to me a master in pathos, but inferior to many in cool argumentation. He rides buoyant on a full tide in description, but while philosophizing wades in a more shallow current. I discover not in his orations that graphic, forcible, figurative language for which some writers are distinguished.

"Yours,

E. B. F."

Mr. Foster was graduated in 1837, with high standing, giving an address (which may be found in a subsequent part of this volume) on "The Eloquence of Expiring Nations."

In a letter to a sick daughter, written years afterwards, he sums up his struggles, and although it somewhat repeats statements already given, and unduly depreciates the attainments he made, it well deserves insertion here.

"I began to fit for college at the age of seventeen, and entered college at the age of nineteen, two years older than the larger half of my class, having studied one year less, and being much more imperfectly fitted than my school-mate from my earliest years, my room-mate in the academy. He was seventeen when we entered college. In my sophomore year I was seized with typhoid fever, lay on my sick bed one whole term, was brought to death's door, went back to college before I was fully convalescent, attempted to go on with my class in a debilitated state, was unable energetically to study, lost rank and standing as a scholar, and finally was compelled to leave col-

lege again, to spend a year in comparative inaction, to break the dear and cherished associations I had formed with my classmates, and to fall back into the next class. No one can know, except by experience, the anguish of my disappointment. To this hour one of my most frequent and frightful dreams is the effort to get through college in vain, going into one class, then into another, then into a third, then into a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, and struggling on to old age without success, to get my graduation. I graduated at the age of twenty-four, and he with whom I had been a school-boy from the first, at the age of twenty-one, outranked me in scholarship, on the books of the college faculty, by several degrees, although in the common school he was in the habit of coming to me ten times a day to help him work out his problems."

It is impossible to produce a more vivid picture of Mr. Foster's life while in college than is given in the following graphic letter from the able pen of Hon. James Barrett, of Rutland, Vt., until lately judge of the supreme court of the State of Vermont, a life-long and honored friend of Mr. Foster.

"Early in college life, Foster, Dewey, and Barrett became intimate, and the intimacy grew more close, more sympathetic, more unreserved and entire, as college life went on. It was not abated by change in class relations. We were each in the most straitened circumstances, and struggling with a common inward impulse to accomplish for ourselves a common end, against obstacles that seemed to most but ourselves not to be successfully encountered. They were tenderly and profoundly pious,—I was not. The effect of my being set back, by poverty, one year in my college course, with no obvious resource for carrying myself through, was to make me rebellious in feeling against the ways of Providence, misanthropic as to the world in general, and prone to skepticism. Byron, in much of his worst, was favorite and familiar for giving myself expression. Foster and Dewey comprehended and appreciated me as I then was. They loved me as I loved them. They, without any demonstrative process or expressed purpose, set themselves to the effort of casting out the demon and restoring me, 'clothed and in my right mind.' Within my sophomore year, their junior, they did it. Neither misanthropy, skepticism, nor rebellion against Providence has been in mind or heart since. When I was back in college in the spring of 1835, my room was in the same house with theirs, and just opposite on

the hall. Our rooms were common between us, and we were together, without regard to time, within the twenty-four hours of the successive days. Our intimacy without doors, through the ways and fields and forests, by day and by night, was not less than within. After the college year of 1835, they took an attic room in the old President Wheelock house, that stood where Read Hall now stands, — ‘the garret,’ as they called it, — and there they abode through the rest of their college life. Though my room was not very near theirs, still our rooms were in common occupancy about as much as before. Their room was famous as ‘the garret,’ by reason of the character and condition of its occupants. Much of the time they boarded themselves.

“They were very unlike as men and as students. They were equal in substance and scope of mind, equal in a consecrated ambition, equal in godly walk and conversation. Dewey was sparkling, playful, and poetic, — harmonizing with *L’Allegro*; Foster was grave, reserved, ratiocinating, — sympathizing with *Il Penseroso*; and yet, on occasion, and with his intimates, he was funny. He and Dewey bantered and sported with each other like children. Both were equal to the utmost exactions of thorough and mastering studentship, yet neither made himself ‘a college dig.’ They regarded a college course as involving and accomplishing much more than rank achieved by marks in the recitation-room, — they regarded it as a stage in the process of personal education, and with excellent discernment they pursued it in such ways as to gain for themselves the utmost measure of development, acquired knowledge, discipline, and cultivation. They ranked well in recitation-room marks; they were the highest as thinkers, writers, and debaters. For literary culture and scholarly finish, they ranked foremost. Dewey answered to the *Poeta Nascitur* of Horace, and exhibited genius of rare capability, at the same time being able and elegant in prose composition. Foster did not affect the ‘linked sweetness’ of poetic numbers. He was as much born to strong, facile, and eloquent prose, as Dewey was to a fine poetic faculty. Foster, in the quality of prose composition, and in his elocution, was regarded the most finished writer and the most eloquent speaker in his class. Through his junior and senior years he had no superior in the college.

“In all written performances the best was expected of both, and that expectation was always answered. It was peculiarly matter of general interest to hear everything produced by Foster. His elocution enhanced the interest. After 1834, for

several years, parts for the stage, on commencement day, were assigned to all the members of the graduating classes. That day of 1837 was very warm. Foster's part came about the middle of the afternoon session. The house was densely crowded with a sweltering, tired, uneasy, and noisy audience. Little or no attention had been accorded to several preceding speakers, their voices even being mainly inaudible on account of the noise, almost hubbub, throughout the house. Foster was announced. He advanced from the side entrance towards the centre of the stage, tall and finely proportioned in figure, dignified and graceful in bearing, solemn and impressive in countenance, wearing the silk robe of those days. As he appeared, and was advancing, a hush in the confusion was obvious, which increased as he approached and bowed to the president, and still more increased as he turned and bowed to the audience. All eyes were becoming intent on the person with such a port and expression. His theme was 'The Eloquence of Expiring Nations'; his first sentence was, 'Death itself is eloquent.' When he had uttered it, with his deep, rich, and commanding voice, with a countenance and bearing that helped to the subduing effect, every sound but the voice of the speaker was hushed to the silence, as it were, of death itself, and that silence continued till he had disappeared from the stage, and still continued till the next speaker was called.

"In all my now long life, in almost annual attendance on commencements of colleges, in more than forty years in courts as lawyer and judge, in the mean time an attendant on sermons, lectures, platform and stump speeches, uttered by all grades, from the highest downward, I have never witnessed such an overmastering effect produced by a speaker upon his audience. There was but one expression in respect to it. Mr. Choate said it was the most eloquent performance of the kind that he ever heard. He was accustomed to recur to it, and repeat the expression during his life. I think every person who heard that piece carried ever after a distinct and vivid impression of the man and his performance."

After graduation in the fall of 1837, he took a position as assistant teacher in Pembroke Academy, remaining there till March, 1838. He then accepted the position of principal in an academy at Concord, N. H., and taught there one term. It was during these months that he learned to sing. In after years he was an excellent singer. He had a fine tenor voice, and could read music well. As a family grew up around him,

nothing pleased him more than, with wife and son and daughter, to organize a quartette in his own house, and without instrumental aid to sing psalm tunes by the hour at sight. The way in which he learned the art of singing illustrates the indefatigable energy with which he carried to a successful issue whatever he undertook. In a letter to his son, he tells how this was:—

“I learned to sing after I was twenty-four years of age, and had graduated from college, by the sheer force of will and drill, with only a tuning-fork and a singing-book. I had no other instrument, and no teacher at all.”

In the fall of 1838 he went to Andover Theological Seminary, entering the class of 1841. He remained here till the middle of January, 1840, or about a year and a half. Extracts from letters to his sister during this time show something of his thoughts and occupations.

“If we study as we ought, with reflection, discrimination, self-examination, and self-application, studying, reading, meditating, not for amusement or pleasure merely, but for practical information, information which we may use in governing ourselves and influencing others, we shall be growing constantly into the stature of intellectual maturity, our spirits will be enriched, our minds replenished, our judgment corrected, our affections chastened, our desires elevated, our hopes enlarged, our courage renewed, our enjoyment augmented, all our energies rendered more efficient. Oh, the rewards of self-denying, persevering application and patient thought! Who would not forego the gratification of sense, for refinement of soul? Who would not sacrifice momentary ease, for permanent delight? And when the heart is cultivated with the mind, so that holiness is acquired as well as knowledge, who would not undergo any privation or sustain any effort, for the peace of conscience and heavenly calm that ensue?”

HANOVER CENTRE, April 23, 1839.

“I am writing to-night, in one of our very plain, but still to me very agreeable rooms. Home is home, be it ever so homely. I do not see why I have not as good a right to love an old-fashioned chair, or unadorned walls, if they belong to my father, and are therefore, as it were, mine, as the Scotchman has to love his rugged hills, or the Switzer his frozen

cliffs. Deliver me from the policy or feeling which estimates everything just according to the price it will bring at an auction or at private sale.

"I have been very busy with compositions, recitations, lectures, letters, etc. Went to Derry on the Fourth to deliver my temperance address; was highly favored in all respects,—audience, delivery, etc. I am well at present, though I consider my health as far from being a certain possession. There are days when I have great enjoyment in devotional exercises, again I am in deep water.

"What books do you read? I have mostly confined myself of late to religious biography and devotional writing. Pray for me, pray for me, and work while it is day."

While here he became engaged to Miss Catherine Pinneo, of Hanover. At this time he wrote a journal, of which the following is an extract:—

"ANDOVER, MASS., June 1, 1839.

"One more spring is gone. Shall I ever enjoy another? Perhaps not. My dear Dewey entered upon his last summer a year ago to-day, with prospects of life and health probably more fair than mine are at this moment. Yet he passed to the shadow-land, even before the opening of the following spring. Fit me, O God! for death. I desire to set my soul in order, and my life. And what does this imply? Towards myself, distrust, denial, control; towards others, meekness, charity, good-will, and good deeds; towards God, confidence, obedience, adoring love; towards sin, abhorrence; and for holiness, the strongest aspirations. How shall I spend this summer aright? I will devote half an hour each morning and evening to devotional exercises. If I walk softly with God, may I not hope that He will enable me to walk wisely with men and happily with myself? 'Practice of present duty is the best teacher of duty to come.'

"I am just closing the first week of the twenty-seventh year of my life. It seems impossible that I am so old. I look back, and certain points of time in my life occur distinctly to mind. At ten, I remember reflecting upon my age, thinking I had lived a great while, and that I never should be a man, the time seemed to move so slowly. At sixteen, I began to study. I felt even then that by-gone years had been long, and that I was still far from man's estate. I entered college at nineteen, with no very definite, yet sanguine hopes. Soon after, the impression first began to creep upon me (and often has it

made me mentally crawl) that I was growing old, and that my term of life might speedily be closed. Now I look, or attempt to look, upon the last seven years (for I cannot with the utmost minuteness of recollection realize so long a lapse), and they seem like 'a dream when one awaketh.' Surely life is a bubble, a vapor, a breath. Shall I continue to be whirled with such velocity towards eternity? Well does it become me, then, to 'do with my might' now. God grant me the will and the power.

"The last has been to me a memorable month,—a month to stand by itself, where memory may return and linger and delightfully repose. The fifteenth day, when joyfully, yet thoughtfully, I went and came; the eighteenth, the day when anxiously I went, and tranquilly, gratefully left; the twenty-second, the day when I parted with confidence unlimited, with love and joy, I fondly believe, which will increase till death. How eventful to me has been the past year! I commenced it with health impaired, a responsible situation as teacher lost. As I progressed, my health improved, the way was opened to me to commence a course of sacred study. A long-cherished desire was thus gratified; the most favorable opportunities for spiritual improvement were afforded. Still, I had not peace of mind, nor joy in religion. I paused, I reflected; became convinced my piety was of the head, not heart. I gave up my hope; I am seeking the favor of God; tremblingly I wait the issue. I have cause for encouragement and for doubt. O, my deceitful heart! Nought can contrast with thee, but the riches of infinite grace. In the winter I lost a friend, Wright Dewey, dear to me above other friends, kind, intelligent, judicious, good, above most who live. Great is my loss. Yet have I gained another, possessed I believe of many of those qualities which distinguished my departed friend. May I be worthy of her, and true to her! And may God smile upon our present attachment, and grant our future union; and may we be to each other henceforth the highest earthly assistance and delight."

In January, 1840, his health again gave way, and he went back to his home at Hanover sick, never to resume his theological studies. In the same month he received an invitation to return to Pembroke Academy as assistant instructor. He took the position and began his duties there in May, 1840. While there he wrote thus to his sister:—

"Do you take any walks these bright mornings, when flowers and blossoms are swelling, the birds carolling, the breezes invigorating, and the whole face of nature bursting into beauty? I was out this morning by half-past five (not very early, by the way), and it was delicious. Did you see the rainbow last night? Was it not superb, as well as charming, — a feast for the eyes, and a glory for the soul? Whenever I begin to teach, and have distinctly brought before me the number of important subjects which I ought to understand; when I see the extent, even, of elementary truths, in their various connections and modes of application, — I seem to shrink into nothing, and a hundred lives seem all too short to give one a thorough training and instruction of mind. O, for grace to improve my time, and means for advancement!"

Aug. 11, 1840, he married Catherine, daughter of Dea. Orramel and Eunice (Hough) Pinneo, of Hanover, N. H. Mr. Foster's engagement at Pembroke closed the last of November, 1840. His aspirations and desires were all for the ministry, and he determined to teach no longer, but to seek a position as a pastor at an early day.

IV.—Pastorate at Henniker, N. H.

1841—1847.

IN June, 1841, Mr. Foster began to labor in the gospel ministry in Henniker, N. H. He was there on trial with reference to becoming pastor in the place, and was expected to preach several Sundays, and do pastoral work throughout the town before the people should decide whether or not they desired his services. While in this critical and anxious position he wrote thus to a brother:—

"HENNIKER, N. H., June 13, 1841.

"My health is as good as when I left Hanover. My time is very busily occupied, and still I accomplish but little. I have visited nearly fifty families, and the people seem friendly and agreeable. I board with a very kind and intelligent family. They are young people, have no children, possess abundant means, and are heartily engaged in every good word and work. It is a pleasant town, rather hilly and rocky, but the land is

productive, and supports in good circumstances an industrious population. The term of my stay here is altogether uncertain. I know not how soon the people will conclude either to give or refuse a call."

Shortly after, however, he received a unanimous invitation to become pastor, and was ordained and installed over the Congregational church in that place, Aug. 18 of the same year.

Henniker is a quiet agricultural town on the Contoocook River. The little village, where the church and academy stand side by side, nestles at the foot of hills so lofty that in some parts of the country they would be called mountains. The soil, like most of New Hampshire land, is thin and rocky, except on the river-bottoms, yet the people manage to secure a comfortable living from it, even when making their homes, as some of them do, on the topmost elevations of seemingly inaccessible hills.

The people in those days — and doubtless their peculiarity has not changed — were a reading, thinking, most intelligent community. In their isolation, and ignorance of the daily paper, solid books and earnest thought were their delight, and the pulpit an intellectual stimulus for which they hungered through the week. The academy flourished in full strength throughout New England in those days, being not yet superseded by the more showy but far less helpful high school of more recent days; and the academy in Henniker was no exception to the rule, that the academy system developed individuality and power of thought as no other system of education can. In consequence largely of such influences, the young people of Henniker, growing up around their young pastor, were becoming independent thinkers, and many of them went forth in after years to take prominent positions in the world's life.

Mr. and Mrs. Foster found a happy home with congenial friends in the house of Deacon and Mrs. Horace Childs. Here their first years in Henniker were spent; here were born their two eldest children, — Addison Pinneo (named for a maternal uncle who died in early youth), and Emily Edgerton (named

for another relative of eminent piety). But no happier portrait of Mr. Foster during this first pastorate could be drawn than is here given by the pen of a life-long friend, Mrs. Horace Childs.

"Mr. Foster entered on his work with much trembling and self-distrust, relying on divine aid, which never failed him. This was in times when a minister was expected to preach two sermons every Sabbath, and conduct a third service in the evening. For a young man who had preached only three times before coming among us, this was the beginning of an arduous work. Add to this his strong desire to make every production of his pen complete, and replete with instruction, glowing with love for souls, and fidelity to God, and we have the elements of the well-nigh perfect minister and preacher he afterwards became.

"He wrote and spoke rapidly, for he had much to say. Of course the mere manual labor of this work was wearing, and the small hours of the Sabbath morning not unfrequently found his pen doing the bidding of his will in preparation for the pulpit. His friends and brother ministers urged him to extemporize, that he might relieve somewhat this labor of the hand, and as best in many ways. This he was reluctant to undertake, but did so effectually. In training himself for this kind of speaking, also for physical exercise, he used often to range over the hills and through the forests till he came to a certain rock, still known among the people in the vicinity (who often saw him in the distance, and sometimes heard the tones of his voice) as Pulpit Rock. Here he would plant himself, and rehearse to imaginary hearers the thoughts teeming from his fertile brain. Then starting homeward with a swinging gait, he would scarcely break his run of more than a mile till he reached home. He would then bury himself in his study for the deeper work of preparing the beaten oil for the sanctuary. In his close application to study, we could see that this method, though better than no change, really gave the mental strain almost no relaxation.

"As might be expected from such devotion to his study, his sermons became richer and richer in thought and in power. Several of them were so highly esteemed by the people as to be requested for publication. This was true of a series on baptism. His ministry was fruitful in good things to the church and to individual souls, as many now living can and do testify, as many others who have passed over the river may

now be testifying with joyful thanksgivings, as he, with them, bows before the great white throne. There was deep religious interest at one time, and thirty or more were added to the communion during his stay.

"It was not always easy for him to satisfy the wishes of the people in regard to parish visiting, and satisfy his conscience in regard to his sermons. Very likely some were unreasonable in their desires. But those who, when sick or afflicted, were favored with his ministrations, felt that his words were well chosen and full of instruction and consolation, his manner also sympathetic and affectionate.

"Humility was a marked feature of his character from the first. I remember hearing him speak of his diffidence in going before a certain tutor (afterwards professor) in college, when his knees smote together as if in a stage-fright! This was, perhaps, not strange; but that, towards myself and others, who looked up to him as a superior being, he should have always been so deferential in manner, made me at least feel exceedingly small. He had a very humble opinion of his pulpit efforts. On one occasion a lady remarked to him that his sermon on the previous Sabbath greatly interested and helped her. He seemed much surprised, said he was glad if any one was benefited, that he was so ashamed of it he wished there had been a back-door through which he could have made his exit without meeting any one face to face, and that he often wondered the people had patience to hear him.

"He had his full share of trials and perplexities, some of them from among the people here, others from outside influences. It was during his ministry that some of the wildest throes of the abolition movement were felt, when the effort of some leaders seemed to be as much to abolish the church and government as slavery itself. This church, from its connection with some of them, was profoundly stirred. Of course the pastor needed a level head and a steady hand to lead it through the excitement. He proved himself equal to the task, by divine help; and while his fidelity to the church was unflinching, his own heart was deeply moved by the condition of the bondsman and the national issues. To his keen apprehension, perplexities were thickening. In those days of frequent change in the ministry, it was not unexpected, although very trying to us, when he made up his mind that he must leave us and seek a change that would give him a little respite from the mental and physical strain which was upon him. He was not ambitious for notoriety. Although he received some tempting invitations to preach, he was first dismissed, and then accepted

a call to Pelham, a place scarcely more eligible than this, except, perhaps, as it was nearer great centres of influence, into one of which he was eventually drawn. He subsequently visited this place several times, always receiving a warm welcome from the people. In the summer of 1850, I think, during a vacation of a few weeks, he addressed a large and enthusiastic audience in the open air, on the issues then before the country, and in behalf of freedom for the slaves, in which some of his utterances, as we look back upon them, were as prophecies. Great interest was awakened, and as an expression of the appreciation felt for his noble, eloquent sentiments, a silver pitcher, with a suitable inscription, was presented him. Again he came from Lowell and gave a lecture in a course before our academy students and their friends. His last memorable and most precious visit was made on his return from a vacation spent in Greenboro', Vt. He then preached his last sermon here, to a crowded and deeply interested audience, closing a faithful and solemn address with the words of Mrs. Stowe's poem, 'Knocking, knocking, ever knocking,' the excitement and effort of which prostrated him for the time. His conversation at our house, with friends gathered here, was a rare treat, whatever the theme discussed, though tinged, when personal experiences were introduced, with a tone of sadness and self-distrust, shading somewhat the comforts of joy in his past work, and assured hope in the future. This, as it struck me, yet indicated a rich experience and a ripe Christian character.

"There were other traits of his life apparent here, which I have not mentioned. With a habitual gravity of demeanor, he yet had a keen relish for repartee, and enjoyed social intercourse with those who could throw a lance with him. But he had too high an estimate of the sacredness of his office to descend to anything like jesting, or that flippancy which often brings the ministerial office into disrepute with men of the world."

Few touches are needed to complete this beautiful pen-drawing. The successive years of this quiet pastorate rolled by with little change. The young minister, battling with poverty, inexperience, a constitutional self-distrust, and chronic ill health, was still gaining strength day by day, and becoming fitted for larger accomplishment in the future. Not only in the long walks to which reference has already been made, but in the care of a garden connected with his home, he found

exercise and aid to health in the latter part of his residence in Henniker. The garden was always faithfully cultivated.

He found relief from the pressure of pulpit preparation by an occasional exchange, sometimes going back to Pembroke, where he had taught. A minister then settled in Pembroke bears testimony, that when Mr. Foster was to preach in the place, "All the young men of the academy would get the news beforehand, and arrange themselves for a treat." Thus early did he manifest that peculiar power of interesting young men, which continued with him to the last, which gave him his largest influence in his subsequent labors in the city, and led him to address so many of the institutions of learning in New England.

Here, too, was manifested that largeness of heart, warmth of affection, and that fervent piety, which throughout life were quite as much elements of his power as any intellectual pre-eminence which may be accorded him. He was devoted to his family, not only embracing in his love and care his wife and children, but as eldest in a large circle, doing all he possibly could for his father and mother, for his brothers and sister. Through his influence, several of his family found opportunities to teach in Henniker, and all were ever welcome at his home.

He met the duties of the ministry in no perfunctory way, but with a burning love for souls. It was his meat to do his Father's will. Every letter of his written at this time breathes a spirit of loving faith in God, and of earnest desire to do good.

In illustration of these points, extracts from his letters are here introduced. Here are paragraphs from a letter written to a brother in the Theological Seminary in New York City:—

"Dear Brother,—We are engaged in a mighty work. It needs a head all intelligence and a heart all love. It is arduous, weighty, overwhelming. Yet, if we are truly devoted, it is the work nearest heaven of any below. Its privileges are commensurate with its responsibilities. The holy minister, whose soul is wholly engrossed, whose energies are all

consecrated, is a privileged man. He breathes in a lofty atmosphere; he has high communings and a heavenly support; he has indeed heavy trials; he needs them. His discipline should correspond with his duties; but he has divine consolation; he has a refuge and a help abundantly sufficient; his strength will be as his day. Trust, then, the Lord, my brother, stay yourself on His promises, lean on His arm, renew your purpose and your vows, set your banners with a fresh confidence and zeal, and in the name of God shall you conquer."

Another to his wife is as follows:—

"I have been reading and meditating to-day, my dearest companion, with much emotion and with some tears, upon household religion. How shall the family be made a school of piety? How shall means be applied and influences brought to bear so as to promote growth in grace and meetness for heaven? I believe heaven has a type on earth, and a preparatory school on earth: it is the holy, happy family. Amid the endearments and blessedness of the domestic circle, amid the ties and obligations and ennobling influences of the conjugal, parental, and filial relations, amid the solemn scenes and thrilling events which every family must meet, there are agencies which the Spirit of God can render mighty for our sanctification. I feel my deficiencies, I feel my remissness; I feel deeply anxious for ourselves and for our children. I believe we need more deliberation on this point, more assiduous attention to times and circumstances and events, more open and frequent reference to all domestic affairs and ordinary topics of conversation, to religious obligation, more anxious inquiry after right modes of instruction, a more systematic use of its means. Shall our dear children be trained for God? Shall we beguile them from paths of sin, and gently win them to heaven? Shall we bring down upon them, by our prayers and our holy instructions and our heavenly example, the distilling, sanctifying dews of God's grace? Shall we help one another efficiently, continually in our journey heavenward? The Lord in boundless mercy, and by His presence working with us, help us to do so. The Lord sanctify for Himself our precious babies; the Lord sanctify us more and more, and make our household in all its branches pastures of loveliness and piety evermore. I cannot say all I wish on this subject. I must talk with you when I see you, to excite to more earnest effort, and to secure an influence if possible, all-pervading, and, with the blessing of heaven, effective to make our home

the abode of religion, with all its beauty and all its delights. Our children may die in childhood, we are liable to be taken away at any moment ourselves, and I shudder with indescribable dread at the thought of a final parting without the hope, for each and all, of endless peace."

The following letter shows his concern for the spiritual welfare of two brothers who had lately left the parental roof to seek a home in the western part of Kentucky: —

"I have been offering to the God of all grace, my petitions for the friends who are out of sight, but never, for any long time, out of mind. My prayers were feeble and inadequate, but they flowed forth from a yearning heart, and from the movings of strong desire. I feel solicitude for B. Has he spent the day communing with God and his own soul? Has he been attentive to duty and to eternal realities? Will he maintain his integrity against temptation from without and inclinations from within, against the delusions of his own heart and the specious appearance and plausible sophistries of a deceitful world? May a merciful God lead him away from evil, and guide him and guard and bless!

"Dear brother, I did not forget you in my musings or my prayers. You know not how fervently I desire that you may taste the joys of pardoned sin and have intimate communion with the Redeemer of your soul. It is a hope which I devoutly cherish, that you will yet be a devoted minister of the gospel, a watchman for souls, and an accepted instrument of important good. If you would consecrate your energies and attainments to holiness to God, how much might you accomplish for Christ, and to swell the blissful anthems of heavenly praise! I know that when your attention is requested, you are willing to listen to the truth with a candid mind; but do you search for it as for hidden treasures? I have never perceived in you a haughty tone nor a determined indifference. But, after all, are you duly aware of the importance of the truth which you allow to pass by with only casual and careless attention? How inadequate is the knowledge, even of the wisest, and how faint are our convictions upon any subject, if we take no pains to keep them lively and distinct, and to strengthen and enlarge them! We must study and meditate, and use all means of information, or we cannot rightly discern and judge respecting any temporal matter; how much less concerning the character and destiny of the soul?"

An incident which broke in upon the quiet of his ordinary life, was an invitation which he accepted to preach for Rev. Dr. Bouton, of Concord, N. H., in some revival services which he was holding. It is interesting to know that Rev. Dr. Blanchard of Lowell, and Towne of Boston, with both of whom he was years afterward associated in the same city, were to be invited to join in these services.

It was seldom that Mr. Foster found opportunity to leave the seclusion of his home among the hills. Yet when he did he made the most of his privileges, and drew lessons from everything he saw and heard. At one time he spent some weeks at Saratoga to recruit his health. In this visit he wrote as follows to his wife: —

"We are at Saratoga Springs, by the favor of a kind Providence, safely guarded through journeying perils, and comfortably provided for our sojourn here. Owing to the excessive heat we came by slow stages. We arrived about five this afternoon. Our progress was as follows: thirty miles Tuesday, to Bridgewater; forty miles Wednesday, to Poultney; thirty-two miles Thursday, to Fortville; fourteen miles Friday, to the Springs.

"I have taken a new boarding-place. I now get my Congress water, more powerful than the others, my Pavilion water, the most agreeable tonic, and my hot baths, by going only a few steps. I have a cool and pleasant room for a dollar a week, and for less than a dollar I have supplied myself with a bit of cheese, and graham bread, and soda biscuit, enough to last me while I stay. A minister and his wife and baby have a parlor and bedroom on the same floor, and are living by themselves in all retirement and domestic bliss. The father and mother sing in the evening, treble and bass sweetly blending, and in the morning the little one tunes its pipes, and in alto key gives a delightful solo, rejoicing all hearts. . . . Ole Bull has been here with his Norwegian magic, and the air is so magnetized with the power of his enchantment, probably, that every fiddle-bow awakes unprecedented strains, and thus I conclude Uncle J. was actually bewitched. One can behold here a specimen, on no very limited scale, either of fashion, splendor, aristocracy, pomp, or outside show of our American continent. Yet, how poor is it all! Wealth can purchase many comforts and many luxuries

which are exceedingly agreeable to pampered, selfish desire; fashion affords many gratifications to vanity and pride, many seeming social delights; yet the pleasures of a pure and holy heart, of a cultivated, enlightened mind, of a quiet home, where souls are knit in closest sympathy, constant communion, unchanging love, how far, how immeasurably superior!

"Dear C., I believe it would not take a long separation from my own loved circle, nor a long observation of the gay and heartless world, to make me feel more deeply even than I have hitherto felt, that God has greatly blessed me in my wife and children; that if darkness gathers in other quarters, here all is light and love; and that, if my heart is weighed down with almost an insupportable burden, yet I have abundant compensation and cause for joy in the nearer, sweeter, richer affections of my own family."

In 1846 he was sent as delegate, in company with Rev. Pliny B. Day, from the General Association of New Hampshire, to the Old School General Assembly, meeting in Philadelphia. In performing this duty he passed through New York, where he heard Rev. Dr. Cox, whose speech he thus describes: "Sarcasm, humor, oddity, bold, novel, striking thoughts, argument, history, mirth, pathos, happy hits, great truths, a strange medley and jumble, brought out with singular independence, and appropriate only for Dr. Cox." From New York he went directly to Washington, and then returned to the meetings of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, both the Old School and New School General Assemblies being in session there. At this time the slavery question was beginning to be hotly agitated, and Mr. Foster took the keenest interest in the discussion. The following extracts of letters written home from Philadelphia, will show his feelings: —

"In going from Philadelphia to Washington I rode all night in the cars. About break of day we passed from free territory into a slave State. I was greatly struck with the contrast. The beautiful houses, embosomed among trees, nestling in flowers, surrounded with a neat garden fence, distinguished for every appearance of taste and comfort, were now very seldom to be seen. Everything seemed more desolate, uncultivated, poverty-stricken, judgment-stricken. For more than forty miles I

did not see a church or a school-house. I think it was not imagination. I think the fields were more barren, and the orchards more stunted, and the dwellings more comfortless, and the whole face of nature more sad. As the cars stopped to take in water in the morning twilight, a whip-poor-will struck up his plaintive cry in a neighboring bush — ‘Whip-poor-will! whip-poor-will!’ ‘Thou mournful bird!’ I could not but exclaim, ‘Poor Will has been whipped enough already, and if the lash could be lifted from his wounded body, and the moral scourge from his lacerated soul, these melancholy plaints of grief, these thrilling cries of anguish, these visible tokens of the Almighty’s displeasure, would no longer afflict this fair land.’ The great subject before the New School Assembly was slavery, slavery. The only able speakers whom I heard were Dr. Cox, Messrs. Hatfield, Bushnell, Hale, Waterbury, Steele, Stevens, and on the other side from the south, Rev. Messrs. Campbell and McLane. The men with whom I was most dissatisfied, and even disgusted, were the fence men who wished to please both parties, to excuse slaveholding and recommend abolition, to let in a little light, but to keep all the darkness. One man of distinction attempted to sustain his position by such an argument as this: ‘God never legislated for, or tolerated in any form, a state of society which was sinful in itself; therefore polygamy, concubinage, divorce, the marriage of brother and sister, the marriage of a man to his grandmother if he wished it, would not be sinful if God had not forbidden them, and were not sinful so long as he permitted them, and in like manner slavery is not sinful in itself.’ Another young clergyman had a well-written specimen of logical absurdity, to show that slavery is control over another’s will, and as God has given to the parent control over the will of his child, and the state control over the criminal will, therefore the relation of slaveholder cannot in itself be sinful. The great majority of the Assembly, however, were right on this subject, were clear, unequivocal, decided in opinion, that the Assembly ought to express its unqualified condemnation of slavery, and to exhort the churches to free themselves from all connection with it.”

Years after, in an address before the General Association of Massachusetts, he referred to this visit in these words: —

“May I be pardoned for a personal reminiscence? In 1846 I was a delegate to the Presbyterian Assembly, Old School, both bodies meeting in Philadelphia. I was present when the pro-

posal came from the New School to the Old for fellowship in their closing service, around the common table of their common Lord. There was no 'chasm' for them to reach their hands across. Yet I heard Dr. Robert Breckenridge, in a speech of great ingenuity and of sophistry, oppose that proposition. He carried the Assembly with him. They rejected the correspondence. They have no ecclesiastical recognition of each other to this hour."

Concerning this Dr. Breckenridge and his brother, Mr. Foster wrote during this Philadelphia visit, as follows:—

"If I had an important cause, a matter of life and death, to plead before an august tribunal, I would place it in the hands of Dr. R. Breckenridge before any other clergyman whom I heard. His voice becomes stronger as he warms up, and while his gestures and tones are effective, they are perfectly natural and unstudied. He seems to forget himself, his manner, and his audience, goes directly to the heart and marrow of his subject, and throws out thought after thought, facts, principles, axioms, arguments, with such fertility, that the hearer is almost irresistibly led along with him. When I heard him, he was arguing a bad cause (against communion with the New School Assembly), but he did it most ably; and though I ached to have some one answer him with like power, and though several attempted a reply, speaking even longer than he did, it was all weakness in the comparison. He has a brother, Dr. Wm. Breckenridge, almost as celebrated as he, and in personal appearance far more prepossessing. Both are of medium height and slender form. Dr. William has a very fair complexion, a high, expansive brow, a ringing, powerful voice. Dr. Robert is very dark, has a low forehead, or at least a forehead on which the hair grows low, and a weaker and less melodious voice. Dr. William is an able debater and preacher, but he cannot, like his brother, carry captive an audience."

In the same visit he wrote further:—

"I have heard to-day Dr. Young of Kentucky and Dr. Scott of New Orleans. It has been to me a peaceful and happy Sabbath. It is a great relief to be exempt from responsibility and the necessity of intense thought, and to enjoy the privilege of being a listener. And when I sit and drink in the words of able and impressive men, it seems like a dream, the thought that I have stood at that solemn post, and discussed those

mighty themes, and involved myself in the eternal issues which must result from such a position. It seems like rash presumption for me to attempt to preach again. And yet, constrained by the love of Christ, and by yearnings for souls, and relying upon the divine assurance that weak things in the hand of God shall become mighty, it is an unspeakable privilege to preach the gospel. My heart is burdened for the spiritual welfare of my people. O for the fruits, the fruits of my labors, in the edification of the church and the salvation of the impenitent! I long with intense desire that the youth may become partakers of God's grace, and consecrate themselves to his service. I long to see whole families, husbands and wives, parents and children, joined in the holy ties of Christian communion, mutual helpers in the Redeemer's service and work, fellow-travelers to heaven, their everlasting and blessed home."

An idea of the quiet yet effective work Mr. Foster did in his country parish may be had from a report of its religious condition, which he read at a meeting of churches in Concord, N. H., in 1843. Portions of that report are as follows: —

"The church in Henniker has received many and rich mercies during the past year. We are permitted to report happy results from efforts made to advance the cause of temperance, to support objects of benevolence, to maintain the faith and order of the gospel, to impart Sabbath-school instruction, to promote union among brethren, to secure attendance upon means of grace, to awaken interest upon religious subjects, and to lead the impenitent to repentance and to God.

"*Temperance.* — More has been accomplished (though not more attempted, perhaps) in behalf of temperance than during any previous year. Lecturers have been employed from abroad. Frequent meetings of the people for free discussion and interchange of thought have been presented, much truth elicited, much interest awakened. The number of names on our Washingtonian pledge is eight hundred and fifty. Unusual preparations are on foot for a temperance celebration of the Fourth of July. Hon. Frank Pierce* is to address us. A stalled ox is to be furnished for refreshment, and no hatred therewith.

"The injured slave has not been forgotten. A monthly concert of prayer for his deliverance, and for the deliverance

* Afterward President of the United States.

of the country from the awful sin of oppression, has been instituted, and attended by increasing numbers, and with augmented solicitude and fervency.

"Truth and Order.—Millerism has attempted to enter in among us, but found no welcome. It has been preached, but none received it, believing that secret things belong to God, and that the truths and motives which apostles proclaimed are best adapted to excite to duty and prepare for death. Attempts have been made, but with no success, to create a party hostile to religion and government, under the disguise of friendship to the slave, or rather, without any disguise at all.

"Sabbath-school.—Our school is large, and is regarded as one of our happiest means of spiritual improvement. Teachers' meetings have recently been established, and much is expected from them.

"Revival.—When internal difficulties had been healed, a measure of divine influence was soon bestowed. Universal seriousness had prevailed, and some instances of conversion had occurred in one district of the town, weeks before; but with the restoration of union and love in the church, the blessing was at once more widely diffused; the hearts of Christians were quickened in heavenly affections; spirituality was increased, and a sense of dependence upon God; deeper solicitude was felt for souls; meetings for prayer and Christian conference were more frequently held and more fully attended, and pervaded with more evident solemnity and engagedness. The starting tear, expressions of concern, and the voice of inquiry began to be seen and heard, as one, and another, and another became convinced of sin and anxious for salvation. And soon, while sin was lamented and self renounced, the language of trust and gratitude and praise was heard from trembling yet joyful lips. In the course of a few weeks almost all the male members of the church went out by two and two, visiting from house to house, thus exerting and receiving a most salutary influence."

In addition to the two sermons, and a prayer-meeting at which Mr. Foster always spoke, on Sunday, he sustained on Thursday evenings a preaching service at some one of the outlying districts in the town. Although this was much of a tax upon his strength, yet he felt it was greatly favorable to the best religious condition of the community.

The care of a first pastorate is always a great strain upon

a young man. In the case of Mr. Foster, an unusually sensitive temperament and an enfeebled frame made the burden greater than he could bear; and after five and a half years of constant labor, he felt that he must have relief in a change of location. He suffered constantly with severe headaches and great lassitude. Accordingly, to the regret of his people and with great sorrow on his own part, he resigned, and was dismissed Jan. 7, 1847. Years after, reviewing this pastorate, he thus expressed himself regarding it:—

“My removal from Henniker was unanticipated, unpremeditated, undesired, painful to my own heart, mysterious. My esteemed and beloved people were not in fault. I look back with gratitude and delight to those years, so swiftly passed, which were spent with you. Especially do I give daily thanks for those kind friends whom God gave me there, whose love and aid have been my choice blessing, my solace in every subsequent storm, and will be through life. There are many souls in Henniker whom I shall meet in eternity under circumstances and with feelings of unspeakable solemnity and interest. May God prepare us all for that meeting, and make it joyful to every one of us.”

V.—Pastorate at Pelham, N. H.

1847—1853.

WHEN Mr. Foster left Henniker he took with him suitable credentials. It is of the utmost importance, both to the ministry and the churches, that deserving men be carefully authenticated. The subject of ministerial standing, especially in relation to the best methods of certifying to such standing, has been much mooted of late. There is an interesting contribution to ecclesiastical history, if not a valuable suggestion for modern needs, in the fact that Mr. Foster, in leaving his charge, was provided, among other papers, with a document from the General Association of New Hampshire, as follows:—

“DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, Jan. 12, 1847.

“This certifies that Rev. Eden B. Foster, late pastor of the Congregational Church in Henniker, N. H., is a regular and

well-appointed minister of the gospel. Mr. Foster's literary and professional qualifications are of a high order. He is understood to be of soundly orthodox principles, and an able and effective preacher and administrator. It gives me pleasure to commend him to the confidence and favor of the churches.

Signed, N. LORD,

President Dartmouth College, and one of the Committee of the General Association of New Hampshire to certify the standing of ministers about leaving the State.

After leaving Henniker, Mr. Foster was for a time without any prospects for the future. He was adrift, his income stopped, a wife and two children to be provided for, debts incurred during his education hanging upon him, his health uncertain, without a home and with no assurance of one. It was a time of great anxiety. One who has seen a baggage train of army wagons filing by all day long, or men standing in a long line for their turn at a ticket office, knows how difficult it is to force one's way into the procession. He who falls out does not easily get in again. Mr. Foster felt all this, but his notions of what was honorable were such that he would not seek another place before he had severed his connection with the first. In this he was undoubtedly unduly sensitive, but such was his feeling, and in consequence he sedulously avoided anything that might look like business shrewdness or self-seeking. He deliberately chose to cut entirely loose from all past associations and obligations before looking elsewhere for a home, lest the effort to find another charge might seem dishonorable to those he was then serving. But in this, though anxious, as any one would be, he was sustained by faith in God. A letter to his wife at this time is as follows: —

"I trust, my dearest, that your cares will not make you sick. Anxieties oppress my own mind sometimes, and fears affright me. I know that you must feel a deep solicitude and concern. Yet let us cheer one another. Let us pray for one another. With steadfast, changeless love, with high and holy trust, let us bear up. We are tried as by fire, — may we come forth from the furnace as gold refined. Jehovah Jireh, — the Lord will provide. The Redeemer's grace is infinite; God's power has neither limit nor bound."

In June, 1847, he went to Pelham, N. H., to preach as a candidate. While thus occupied he wrote to his wife, after the first and second Sabbaths respectively, as follows:—

“I am pleased with the place, and so far as I have seen, with the people. If the people are pleased, and there is a prospect of support (and Providence seems so to order), I should like to stay here. I think it is a place where a faithful minister may be useful and happy. I think it is as wide and influential a field as I deserve or can get. If I can live and labor and die here, and be so highly privileged as to be an instrument in the hands of God of advancing the triumphs of the truth and building up this church and winning souls to Christ, I am and shall be content. I ask no higher honor,—I seek no richer reward. If I can disencumber myself of debt, and provide for my family, and do something to comfort my feeble and afflicted parents, it is all I ask of earthly reward. I come here as I went to Henniker, — with a most lively and almost appalling sense of insufficiency. To deal with the welfare of immortal souls, to have a moulding hand either for good or evil upon the character of a whole congregation of undying spirits, throws upon me a responsibility which crushes me down with its overpowering weight. O for a more living, clinging, appropriating faith! Pray for me, my dear wife, that the strength of God may be made perfect in my weakness. To take a part in that great negotiation which brought the Saviour down to earth, and which God is carrying on by so many agencies and such mighty means, is a position so solemn and so fearful that sometimes I shrink from it with an overwhelming sense of weakness and unworthiness.

“I feel unworthy to walk in the footsteps of Dr. Church, and stand in the breach which was made in Zion’s walls when he fell. If I can satisfy this people and do them good, I shall have cause to rejoice and bless my heavenly Father. It is painful, beyond expression, to leave the dear people at Henniker. May God bless them, and send them a much better minister than they have lost!”

“I have had a happy Sabbath. I trust that God has been with me, that His arm has been about me, holding me up, and that His banner over me has been love. I have had in most of the exercises of the day enlargement of mind and desire, and a sense of God’s presence to an unusual degree. I have preached twice; in the afternoon an extemporaneous sermon prepared during the week. Oh, it is sweet to lean upon God,

and to labor for Him, and to seek His love as the sole reward. I am afraid that I do not estimate aright my responsibilities, or live up to my privileges. I am afraid that I know but little of the faith and the fear, the love and the trust, the self-loathing and the holy living of such souls as Baxter and Edwards and Payson and Brainard and Martyn; yet I humbly hope that God has given me some knowledge of His love, and that He will show me greater things than these, and strengthen me for the solemn and arduous services to which He calls me. I know that the pulpit appears to me a very solemn place. My heart sometimes faints, and my knees totter, and my whole frame trembles, when I rise to proclaim the message of the great God. Who is sufficient for these things? Oh, that divine strength might be illustrated and made perfect in my weakness! If my weak and imperfect labors can be made instrumental, by my humble and constant waiting upon God, in the salvation of souls, my heart shall be filled with joy."

An invitation to preach in Pelham for a year was given him immediately after the second Sabbath of his candidacy, and he at once accepted it. But the worldly advantages of this opening at Pelham, were not large. He was to receive only \$500 for the first year's services. But the place was open, and it gratified his desire for a quiet life and a confiding people. He thought he should be tempting Providence to decline it, and treating the church unhandsomely to delay his answer while looking about for another parish; so he accepted the invitation without a further question. Five days after, he received a very complimentary letter from St. Johnsbury, Vt., opening to him there the prospect of a much larger salary and a much wider field of usefulness. Had it come earlier, he would gladly have accepted the offer; but it was now too late, and he had no regrets over the fact. He was entirely contented with the spot providentially allotted him. He took up his work in Pelham with eager anticipations of privilege. He found warm-hearted friends and helpers in his new parish, and was always contented and thankful in the opportunities of usefulness given him among them.

Pelham is a small town on the southern border of New Hampshire, six miles north of Lowell, Mass. It is mainly

located on the bed of a prehistoric lake, which in some unknown age covered a space some six or eight miles in length and three miles in width. This ancient lake-bottom is now a level reach of sand, through which meanders sluggishly, as if loath to leave the overhanging willows and grassy meadows along its banks, a shallow stream known as Beaver Brook. In the middle of this sandy plain is an old-fashioned public common, where half-a-dozen roads meet, and where stand, besides a dozen farm-houses and a store, all facing a common centre, two churches, one a modern structure, and the other an ancient building, then used only as a town hall. This latter edifice, however, still retained the curious paraphernalia of earlier days, — the square pews, with seats on three sides that turned up when the congregation rose to pray, and came down with a noise like a volley of musketry when prayer was ended; the high galleries running round the house just under the roof; the lofty box pulpit; the huge sounding-board, hanging over it by a single iron rod, far more threatening than the sword of Damocles to the minister who stood beneath. In this ancient edifice Rev. Dr. John H. Church had ministered for many long years, and had exerted a wide influence in religion, education, and politics in southern New Hampshire.

At the time Mr. Foster came to Pelham, the parish was small and constantly decreasing. Manufacturing towns were springing up along the Merrimack River, which in a great curve flowed around the town, and so could be reached not many miles away, both to the west and to the south. In consequence, the young people of Pelham, and even its more substantial families, were leaving, one after another, for places of greater life and prosperity. Such has been the drain on this quiet nook in the country, that to-day very few remain of those to whom Mr. Foster ministered in 1847. And yet, in spite of these discouragements and this seeming lack of incentive, Mr. Foster labored as faithfully as if he stood at the centre of the world's life. His motive power was within him, in his own high ideal of the ministry and his burning desire for souls.

On the 21st of June, 1848, he was installed pastor of the

church, remaining in this position till his dismissal, Jan. 18, 1853. When he became a settled pastor, his salary was increased a hundred dollars, making it the same that he had received at Henniker. Among the letters he received at this time is one from an uncle, who speaks of his receiving "a loud call" to Pelham, and as salaries in country parishes in those days ranged from \$350 to \$700, the uncle was quite in earnest. The sum seems small to us, but it was supplemented by the frequent gifts of a generous people, who, according to the custom of the times, brought in the produce of their farms and sometimes sums of money for their loved pastor.

During these years nothing was more marked than his tender interest in all his family friends. He writes thus to his father:

"I enjoyed my visit at home very much, for which I am grateful to God and to you. My mind was occupied often with the thought that it might be the last time. Your health, my dearest parents, is impaired and precarious. Old age is creeping upon you early and rapidly. I hope that your last days will be serene and happy, that your communion with Christ will be intimate and constant, heart-refreshing, soul-sustaining, that His grace will be revealed to you in all its wonders, and that heaven will come very near to you before you leave this earth."

He is deeply interested in his brothers, some of whom were then pursuing their studies in the Theological Seminary at Andover, and he says concerning one of them, "I have offered to him money to pay half of his bank debt, if he will go to Andover this fall. I am willing to incur almost any load and run almost any risk for myself, rather than see all his plans and prospects ruined." Another letter to a brother in the Seminary is of value as showing the kind of reading which then interested him.

"I write you a line at this time to indicate the hope that we shall see you and R. and B. soon, and to say that if you can bring me down a few volumes for winter use, it will be a particular favor. Among the books which I have not, and which I should be much interested in reading, are the following, and somewhat in the following order:—

"1. Lamartine's Girondists, Prescott's Histories, Mackintosh's Life and Correspondence, Henry Ware's Life and Works, Alison's Miscellanies, Channing's Life and Works, Chalmers' Miscellanies, Judge Story's Miscellanies, Verplanck's Miscellanies.

"2. O. Dewey's Discourses, Griswold's American Prose Writers, Griswold's Poets, Morell's Philosophy, Howitt's Homes and Haunts of Poets, Mackintosh's Miscellanies, Webster's Speeches, Stephens' Miscellanies, Bryant's Poems, Southey's Poems, etc.

"Some half-a-dozen of these will be to me a great treat, or if you cannot get these, you can get others perhaps equally interesting."

During this period he had two children born to him,—Charles Alfred Dewey and Edward Payson; but one was smitten with sickness, when in his second year, and died after a brief illness; and after the other had reached the same age, he was similarly taken. Words cannot describe the intensity of loving anxiety with which the father, no less than the mother, hung over these children, and strove, though vainly, to fan the flickering spark of life back into flame. He thus expresses himself in regard to the birth of the one, and the death of the other:—

"APRIL 19, 1849.

"*Dear Parents*,—I suppose you have no objection to have your posterity increased, provided they are as good as some of their ancestors. I have the pleasure, therefore, to inform you that, in the kind providence of God, you are once more the grandparents of a fine, stout boy. He was born on Wednesday, the 18th inst. We detect in him resemblances to a great number of distinguished individuals. He has his mother's black hair, and his father's black face. He has the blue eyes of the Pinneos, and the same ability to make an impressive proclamation of his ideas. He lacks not for dignity of gesture, or vigor of speech, or awe-inspiring frown. He has his grandmother's chin and perpendicular features, his grandfather's forehead, his aunt's interesting, generous countenance, Uncle C.'s and Uncle D.'s bump of independence, and we doubt not that he will have the wit of Uncle D., the eloquence of Uncle R., the judge-like candor of Uncle B., the easy manners of Uncle E. We do not forget his other uncles

and relatives, either paternal or maternal; but time does not permit me to trace all the parallelisms. He weighs only ten pounds and a quarter, and his mental powers seem to be on the same scale of magnitude. His mother and Aunt S. wish to have him called Charles Alfred, in order to keep in fresh remembrance and undecaying perpetuity the names and the merits of the dear, absent Californians. My own mind balances between two or three different appellations. I like this name very much. I look out upon the beauties and prospects of this opening and hopeful season of the year, and I feel disposed to call him April Blossom. I have been greatly interested in Macaulay's History of England, and the noble sketches which he draws of Puritan character, and I should like to have a John Hampden in the family. I remember the benefit and the happiness I once derived from the society of a dearly beloved friend, and I find great attractions in the name Wright Dewey. But the name is of less consequence than the character. Whatever name he bears, may it be written in the Lamb's book of life, and he be early sanctified and spared to live for Christ and to serve His cause. Pray for us, my beloved parents, and for our children, that we may have new measures of wisdom and grace under the new responsibilities laid upon us, and that these precious souls whom God has given us, may be jewels forever in the Redeemer's crown."

"AUGUST 5, 1852.

"*Dear Parents*,—'It is well with the child.' He sleeps where pain shall no more rack the body, nor grief oppress the mind, nor sin afflict the soul. He has been a child of sorrows from his birth, startled by surprises, assailed by diseases, distressed by many pains. The usual diseases incident to childhood attacked him by turns, till now a disorder more terrible than all seized him, and death has triumphed over him. His final sickness, especially the last half of it, was exceedingly painful, I think even more so than that of our other little one. He was conscious till within an hour of his death, and turned upon us his placid and loving eye whenever we spoke to him. He was an interesting child, I think I may say, without a father's blind partiality. His intellect was active, his feelings were sensitive, and his entire temperament was of the nervous and excitable order. I never saw a child who had more of the disposition and faculty of imitation. He would mimic, with great precision and beautiful art, our tones, our looks, our gestures, our attitudes. In throwing ball, playing with marbles, assorting buttons, pointing out pictures, driving the

children for his horse, leading us by the fingers to the table when he wanted food, and in various forms of pantomime, by which he expressed his wants, in the lack of words, his ingenuity was a delight, and sometimes a wonder, to us if to nobody else. But God has taken him. Another dart penetrates our spirit, another wound is inflicted upon our bruised and bleeding hearts. Our house is lonely, our hearts are desolate and sad. We hope we are not stubborn and rebellious under God's dispensations; but this affliction is a very great and severe one to us. We trust that we are thankful for the remembrances of the past. We bless God that such a child has been given us so long, that such an angel of our blood and name is now before the throne. We bless God for the confident belief that our two departed infants are now twin cherubs in heaven, joining hand in hand and voice with voice in the high service and songs of the blessed. May God prepare us to join them in their holy employments and ecstatic delights."

In 1851 Mr. Foster received a call from the Central Church, Lawrence, Mass. He accepted this call, subject to the advice of council. The council, however, advised against his going, and he deferred to its judgment and withdrew his acceptance. The Lawrence people were not content to leave the matter thus, and renewed their call, but in vain. His own people rallied to his aid and relieved him from pecuniary embarrassments resulting from the death of his two youngest children, the severe and protracted sickness of his two eldest, and a fire which drove him and his family from his house into the snow at midnight. Not only did they repair the house, replace a portion of the furniture, and bring him several loads of wood, they also made up for him a considerable purse of money. Because of these great kindnesses he felt under obligations to them, and he would not leave them.

But it was not in God's purpose that he spend his life in the retirement of this small pastorate. Towards the close of 1852 he received a call to the John-street Congregational Church in Lowell, Mass.; but shrinking from the responsibilities of the charge, and deeming himself incompetent to assume them, he

declined to go. The call was renewed, however, and was urged with such kindness, and so many assurances in the way of encouragement, that his objections were overcome. He accepted the call, and was dismissed from his pastorate in Pelham, Jan. 18, 1853. A fitting summing up of his work in Pelham, is kindly furnished by the Rev. Augustus Berry, his successor.

“As it is now nearly thirty years since the conclusion of Dr. Foster’s ministry in Pelham, it is almost impossible to learn anything about that ministry from the present population. Those to whom he ministered have nearly all passed away, and only a few, comparatively, of the present population remember him. The time of his ministry was the commencement of essential changes that have taken place in the substantial families of the town, by deaths and emigration. At that time there was a large number who highly appreciated and enjoyed Mr. Foster’s efforts, admired him as a man and Christian minister, and were proud of him as a citizen. The people were drawn to his pulpit ministrations. His sermons, so rich in thought and illustration, of such rhetorical beauty and power, so spiritual, so tender, and faithful to the eternal interests of men, bound the listeners as by a spell.

His ministry at Pelham was at a time when the question of slavery was beginning to profoundly agitate the nation, and the forces were marshalling for the conflict that had its issues in the civil war. He spoke openly and boldly on this question. His utterances were unmistakable. They came from the deep convictions of his heart, but they were in such a spirit that men were compelled to listen, and could not take offence. He embraced everything here in his labors that pertained to the welfare of the people. He served on the school committee, and imparted the inspiration of his own literary spirit and love of education to the children by his interesting and earnest talks to them. The town lyceum was at that time both an entertainment and an intellectual force among the people. He gave it his time and strength, and imparted not merely an interest, but charm, to its exercises.

“He remembered that he was among an agricultural people, and he gave to their chief interest his thought and study, and delivered agricultural addresses of great merit. He won the affections of the people, so that it was their delight to consider his wants, to meet him in his family, and entertain him

and his family in their homes. They were jealous of the interest that some other churches took in him, and to the limit of their ability resisted the desirable calls given him elsewhere, and his pastorate of nearly five years among this people was terminated with the regret and sorrow of the entire population.

"There were additions to the church during his ministry, and he undoubtedly sowed much seed that has since matured and been garnered. I think the feeling of the people towards Dr. Foster may be expressed in the brief sentence, 'They loved him!' The mightiest influences are the subtlest and least observed. I think this may be said to be characteristic of the ministry of Dr. Foster. The influence of it is a living and persistent force."

VI.—First Pastorate in Lowell, Mass.

1853—1861.

THE circumstances under which Mr. Foster came to be invited to Lowell, are told by himself in his sermon at the fortieth anniversary of the John-street Church, held in 1879. These are his words:—

"In coming to Lowell I was led, as it seemed to me, by providential indications. On the first Sabbath of October, 1852, I had agreed upon an exchange of pulpits with Rev. Dr. Child, of the First Church in this city. A great rain was falling on the morning of that day. As the same horse was to convey us both to our respective places of labor, and as I was suffering from influenza and hoarseness, I thought it not wise to sally forth. The exchange took place on the last Sabbath of the month. Two days previous, Daniel Webster died, and on the Sabbath lay in his shroud. The event was referred to in nearly every pulpit in the land, with emotion everywhere,—with tearful emotion throughout New England. I stopped with Hon. Linus Child, and some words of mine, I know not what, touched his great heart and his great mind. It was through his recommendation that I was introduced to the John-street pulpit."

On the morning of Nov. 14, 1852, he preached for the first time in the John-street Church, choosing for his text, "Run, speak to that young man!" The John-street people heard



LOWELL, MS.
1840.

him only this one Sabbath, but with great unanimity and heartiness extended him a call to become their pastor. He was installed Feb. 3, 1853. At that day Lowell had a population of between twenty and thirty thousand. Nearly all the great corporations now established there were then in existence, and the system of canals and water-power was complete. The city has since grown to more than twice the size, mainly by the building of additional mills on the grounds of these corporations, and by the fortunate introduction of a large number of small private manufactories. But the city, then as now, was filled with industrious, orderly, intelligent mechanics and operatives, together with the shop-keepers, professional men, civil engineers, journalists, and others who were drawn together to serve so great a company. The city was a hive of busy life, not as rich as now, but full of God-fearing people, and crowded with men and women of active brains and independent thought. In such a field of labor Mr. Foster, matured by twelve years of ministerial experience, in his very prime, being thirty-nine years of age, entered on what proved to be the scene of his chief toils and triumphs in the ministry.

The John-street Church was then one of five Congregational churches within the city limits, and the third in the order of formation. It was organized in 1839, with two hundred and forty-three members. It had had but one pastor previous to Mr. Foster's coming, the Rev. S. W. Hanks. "The church," wrote one of the committee to Mr. Foster, in urging his acceptance of the call, "has always been a working church, characterized as such at home and abroad. It contains a large proportion of active members. About fifty male members and one hundred and fifty or more female members belong to it. There was nearly this number present when action was taken in reference to calling Rev. Mr. Foster, all voting, male and female, by rising." Under such favorable auspices Mr. Foster began his work. He gave his strength to his sermons, rightly deeming that if a minister failed of power there, he failed everywhere; and that whatever else must be neglected in consequence, his pulpit influence must, if possible, be maintained.

"During eight years and a half," says Rev. J. B. Seabury, in a historical sermon, "he preached the gospel with eminent power and persuasiveness. His labors as a student were almost unparalleled. It was his custom in those days to prepare four written discourses a week, three for each Sabbath and one for the weekly evening lecture." It did not take long for him to get into the harness and to find himself carrying a load under which a man of less energy and activity of mind would have staggered. What he was doing may be gathered from a letter written to his father towards the close of his first year in Lowell: —

"I have been suffering for three weeks past with a very severe cold. At the same time I have had an unusual amount of labor to perform, and shall have for some days to come. I am writing a series of discourses to young people. Three of these have been delivered. The first, on 'The Bible as the Guide of Youth'; the second, on 'The Elements of a Noble Character'; the third, on 'The True Objects of Life.' I have one to prepare for Sabbath after next, on 'The True Means of Securing these Objects.' I have engaged to deliver a lyceum lecture at Carlisle a week from this evening, and this week must be devoted to preparation. Last week I preached two installation sermons, one at Stratham, N. H., at the installation of Rev. Mr. Steele, a former pupil at Pembroke. My subject was, 'The Office and Obligation of the Church as the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.' The other sermon was at Salem, N. H., at the installation of Rev. Mr. Page, late of Hudson, with whom I have often exchanged; subject, 'The Minister's Great Aim, and the Means of its Accomplishment.' These engagements were made before I was in my present state of pulmonary debility, and I cannot well avoid them. I do not design to engage myself for any more extras this winter. I have enough to do at home. For example, I have a meeting for every evening of this week except Saturday, and on Wednesday I have one to attend in the afternoon and evening both. If I had not efficient helpers and indulgent hearers, I should sink. I sometimes think I shall be obliged to relinquish such responsibilities."

This variety and amount of work were continued throughout Mr. Foster's pastorate in Lowell, until at last a naturally

strong constitution and a vigorous brain could bear the strain no longer, and he was forced to stay his hand and find relief in a change of location. Some extracts from his letters at different dates during this period of his life will illustrate the energy with which he was spending his days.

“AUGUST 31, 1858.

“I have a great amount of labor before me for the autumn. I must write more new sermons than I have for the last year. I design to commence immediately a course of monthly sermons on the Christian Home; also another series, to be preached as convenience permits, on the Evangelical Doctrines. I have three special sermons, one on the Atlantic Cable, one on Home Missions, and one for the United Service, all of which must be written, if possible, in September.”

“JANUARY 29, 1859.

“*My Dearest A*——, — I am very tired to-night, but I am not likely to have any time to-morrow to write to you, and after to-morrow my whole week will be full of toil: Tuesday, journey to Northampton; Tuesday night, spent in visiting my daughter Emily; Wednesday, examination of the pastor-elect at Pittsfield; Wednesday evening, a religious lecture; Thursday, installation sermon at eleven o'clock; Thursday evening, address before the Young Men's Christian Association, the same one I delivered here in 1855; Friday, home again, one hundred and thirty miles by railroad; Friday evening, lecture in my church as usual; Saturday, preparation for the Sabbath, a whole week's work; Sunday, Feb. 5, my anniversary sermon, six years from the date of my settlement. That is my programme for seven days to come, 'a pretty considerable, right-smart chance of work,' as the Westerners would say. I have preached to-day three times: forenoon, forty minutes, on 'Man's Need and Riches of God's Mercy,' text Phil. 4:19; afternoon, on 'Lessons drawn from History of Persian Magi following the Star,' text Matt. 2:2; evening, twenty-five minutes extemporaneous, on 'The Church, God's Spiritual Temple,' text Eph. 2:21. I made a blunder in announcing the second head in the afternoon; and that mistake embarrassed me all the way. Rev. Dr. Lord, president of Dartmouth College, came in to hear me, and that completed my discomfiture. Oh, that I could fling off these trammels of diffidence and agitating fear! We had the largest number to-night at our conference-meeting that we have had for three

months, and the meeting was very impressive and solemn. Three inquirers were in the library-room meeting last Tuesday night. I have prepared for the installation next Thursday a discourse on 'Christian Independence in the Minister,' text, 1 Cor. 7:23. I. Cherish independent thought. II. Act as the Servant of Christ. III. Means of reaching these results: 1. A holy life; 2. Unity of aim; 3. Moral courage; 4. Growth in knowledge; 5. Christian charity; 6. Patient hope. The sermon does not satisfy me at all. My head is weary and confused, and I may not rightly judge, but it seems to me to lack that logical coherence and unity which should bind all the parts into a perfect whole. I look forward to the labors and the results of the week with great anxiety."

The same month he writes to his daughter: —

"I am very tired to-day, for I preached yesterday a sermon which cost me nineteen hours of consecutive, constant writing. The whole previous week was spent in gathering the thoughts and facts and method of the sermon. My subject was 'Woman's Mission,' illustrated in four particulars: 1. To educate herself; 2. To educate the young; 3. To cultivate religious excellences; 4. To make home happy. A sublime mission, and in a vast number of instances nobly has she accomplished it."

During this whole period he was constantly called on for all kinds of outside work in the city and out of it. He cheerfully responded to these calls as far as he was able, believing not only that he was bound to further the cause of Christ outside the limits of his own parish as far as he had influence and strength, but that the interests of his own people were advanced, and his influence over them was increased, by whatever reputation these outside efforts might give him.

These calls for extra-parochial duties took on a great variety. There were sermons, or other parts, at ordinations and installations, in great number; there were literary lectures at lyceums and in church courses; there were special sermons to young men; there were temperance addresses, essays before church conferences, political sermons and addresses, educational addresses, orations before schools and colleges; together with many newspaper articles, which at this time he frequently

contributed to the *Congregationalist*, and to the daily papers of Lowell. A hint of what he was constantly doing in this direction may be gained from the following extracts from his letters.

“SEPTEMBER 29, 1858.

“On Monday I have agreed to preach a sermon in Manchester, Mass. On Tuesday I am to attend an installation in the same place, and am appointed substitute preacher, if Rev. Dr. Stone, of Boston, fails. I have been invited to address an agricultural society in Pepperell on Thursday, Oct. 7, but have sent a negative answer. Some of my people are very anxious that I should go down to Newburyport to address a Sabbath-school convention, which is to be held on Wednesday and Thursday of next week.

“The meeting of the young men, last Sabbath evening, went much beyond my expectations, and was greatly encouraging. I seemed to have divine assistance in the services of the day beyond my hopes.

“I have sent, this week, three articles for publication in the *Congregationalist*, entitled as follows: ‘The Revival of 1858’; ‘Doctrinal Purity and Church Prosperity’; ‘Is it Peace or War?’ They will probably appear (perhaps in the editorial columns) sometime in the course of this month. I have also sent to the *Courier*, of this city, an article on Filibusterism.”

“LOWELL, Sept. 29, 1859.

“I preached my temperance sermon last Monday evening in Huntington Hall, to an audience filling all the seats and most of the standing room. It was a most laborious effort. It always requires the last outlay of my strength to be heard in that house, and for days afterward I feel as if all my life-springs were exhausted.”

“OCTOBER 13, 1859.

“I received yesterday a letter containing a fifty-dollar bill, with the following explanation: ‘Mr. Foster: Please accept this sum from the friends of temperance, as a slight testimonial of the approbation with which your valuable lecture was received, delivered in Huntington Hall on Sunday evening, Sept. 25, 1859.’ The sermon has been requested for publication, and will soon appear in print. In the midst of my disabilities and fears I have some weighty cause for gratitude and hope.”

The five Congregational churches of Lowell were at that time in the closest affiliation. A united service was held monthly, by turn, in the different churches, at which all the ministers were present,—the pastor of the church in which the service was held preaching the sermon. Through this most admirable practice the New Testament idea of one church in one community, though worshipping in many places, was practically attained, so far as the Congregational churches were concerned. These five were brought into such sympathy and relationship, that they worked as one and took counsel constantly for the interests of the common cause. The ministerial force in these churches was at that time a strong one,—Rev. Willard Child, D. D., with the First Church; Rev. J. P. Cleaveland, D. D., with the Appleton-street Church; Rev. Amos Blanchard, D. D., with the Kirk-street Church; Rev. Joseph H. Towne, and afterwards Rev. Owen Street (since then receiving the honorary degree of D. D. from Yale College), with the High-street Church. These brethren worked in perfect harmony, meeting every Monday in Dr. Blanchard's study to consult together. Among these ministers and churches Mr. Foster held an honored and influential position. He shrank from publicity, and was too sincerely humble ever to push himself to the front; but he was constantly solicited and urged to public duties, and was too conscientious to refuse when he saw a prospect of usefulness. He was deeply interested in all that concerned the public welfare, and believed that the pulpit should be used as much as the press in shaping public opinion on all great questions of the day. He was glad, also, to keep himself fresh and out of ruts; to speak and write, as far as time and strength permitted, for occasions outside his pulpit. Having this spirit, he was to an unusual degree a public man. The citizens of Lowell, without distinction of church or party, respected him, and sought opportunities to hear him. As the years went by, and his consistent and beautiful life was seen, and his work recognized, he became generally known and sincerely loved.

He commenced his ministry in Lowell in a time of great

political agitation. It was just after the death of Webster, in the midst of the antislavery conflict, and when the battle over the Fugitive Slave Law and the extension of slavery through the territories, and other similar questions, was the hottest. Mr. Foster was not a man to be silent at such a time. On June 25, 1854, he preached two sermons, one on "The Rights of the Pulpit," justifying the ministry in protesting against these outrages on civil liberty; the other on "The Perils of Freedom," discussing the dangers to the republic in the extension of slavery. These sermons were published at the request of his people. Concerning them he wrote: —

"Since coming to Hanover, I have seen a notice taken from the *Boston Bee*, which speaks of the sermons as 'making the fur fly around the ears of conservative hearers in a manner truly awful.' It is a slang phrase, but it gives an entirely false impression of the discourses, as controversial, aggressive, denunciatory. I feel, and my friends here feel, that in some way or other, the sermons ought to be placed before Mr. — and Mr. —, and some other leading and most estimable men of Lowell who were friendly to the compromises of 1850, that they may understand that I made no assault upon that class of men, and had not the most distant thought of questioning, in any form or any degree, their patriotism, or wisdom, or nobleness. I have supposed, and suppose still, that those men are among the most decided to disapprove of the Nebraska Law, and in the positions which I took I supposed I should have their entire concurrence. Certainly I have not taken any position more ultra than those taken by Dr. Gannett of Boston, and Dr. Stearns of Cambridge, and some of the most eminent and reliable statesmen of the land in their published sermons and addresses."

Other political events followed in rapid succession. In 1856 were the troubles in Kansas and the assault on Senator Sumner by Preston S. Brooks. Concerning the stand he took relative to these events, he wrote thus: —

"MAY 29, 1856.

"*My Dear Father*, — I hope that you are well. Of course you cannot be happy. The darkest day our country has yet known is upon us. Clouds and thick darkness, fire, blood, and smoke, man's wrath and God's vengeance are on our track, as

the terrible monsoon of the desert overtakes the fated caravan. Sumner is beaten on the head with a heavy cane until he is senseless, and he is probably soon to die; Kansas is crushed by the armed forces of Slavery; freemen will all be murdered or driven out thence, and the State is doomed to bondage. The South, by her presses and her assemblies, are sustaining the assassin Brooks. Threats of personal violence and of a wider vengeance are coming from the South. Members of Congress are arming. Pierce is an infatuated tool of Slavery. Never, never, did we stand in the midst of such fearful portents overshadowing the nation. Never, never, was there such cause for wise counsels, fervent prayers, and righteous action on the part of free men and free women. Religious Liberty lies wounded, faint, and bleeding to death. Free Speech staggers under a mighty paralysis, struck by the blow which leveled Sumner to the ground. I preached last Sabbath one hour on the parricidal blow which has fallen upon the sacred cause of piety and republicanism in our land and in all the world. It was all written after Friday morning, under a pressure of anxious thought, and with an ardor of supplication to God such as I have never felt before. My church was crowded as I have never known it before since I have been in Lowell. The city is charged to the brim with pity and fear for Sumner, and with indignation at the unholy outrage perpetrated upon freedom."

This sermon, preached at Lowell, was followed by another, preached while spending his vacation among his old parishioners in Henniker, N. H., where he had arranged an exchange with their pastor, Rev. J. M. R. Eaton, for the month of August. That sermon was printed by request, under the title, "A North-side View of Slavery."

Still later came the John Brown raid in Virginia. Concerning this Mr. Foster felt deeply. He regarded it not only a mistake, but a crime. But let him speak for himself.

"NOVEMBER 16, 1859.

"In regard to old 'Ossawatimie,' I foresaw that the Republican party are likely to be divided in opinion. I oppose, and shall to the end, the extension of slavery. I condemn, and shall in plain, unequivocal language, and with an indignation in some degree proportioned to the wickedness of the deed, the outrages of the slaveholders in Kansas. I know that John

Brown suffered unheard-of wrongs in the destruction of his children, his property, his individual rights. But two wrongs never make one right. I am not a man of blood. I do not lead a company of pirates, or an army of slaughterers, into Virginia because Captain Buford led a horde of plunderers and murderers into Kansas. I do not uphold John Brown in an attempt to run off slaves. But the proof is clear to my mind that he meant to do far more than this. He went in with arms, rifles, guns, and pikes,—enough for more than five hundred men. He seized upon an armory, the property of the United States. He took white men prisoners before any assault had been made upon himself. He took the lives of at least five white men. He had a Provincial Constitution all drawn up, with signatures, seal, and officers chosen under it, for the maintenance of a government in Virginia. Fred Douglass says expressly that their plan was to emancipate the slaves of Virginia and Maryland, and of course to maintain a rebel government in those States. The proof is perfectly conclusive to my mind, that John Brown was guilty of treason, if not of murder. I am willing to admit that he was goaded by awful wrongs, but retaliation is not our law; I am willing to admit that he was perfectly conscientious, but there is many a wild, misguided, perverted conscience, which does not in any degree diminish the crime. I cannot regard John Brown as a hero or martyr. We are brought, in my opinion, by this event to the most fearful crisis to which the nation has ever been brought. If the Republican party, as a party, or if any considerable portion of the honest men of the party, justify John Brown, the door is opened for the incursion of whites into the Slave States to incite slave rebellion. The Slave States will not endure that principle for an hour. Dissolution of the Union and civil war will come, with infallible and fatal certainty, if the North adopt that platform. I have always maintained that we had not the slightest right to interference, in the Slave States, by force and arms. Argument, love, and persuasion are all the weapons that we, as individuals, can employ. Congressional discussion and enactment, and peaceful legislation, are all the weapons we can employ as States. The doctrines of Garrison, Phillips, Pillsbury & Co., which deny all government in the land, which go to uproot all our republican institutions, of course encourage slave rebellion, and the conspiracy of whites to aid them. In their view, by logical necessity, John Brown is a hero and a martyr of the highest type. But I stand at a heaven-wide distance from their doctrines, not only as to religion, but as to the government of the

country. I am living under the same constitution with the Slave States. I have accepted that constitution. I regard it as the highest and most perfect Magna Charta of human rights ever accepted by any people under the sun. That constitution does not allow me to incite slave rebellion. The moment I do it I am a traitor to the government of my country as much as Benedict Arnold was. When I reach that point, my first blows will be aimed, not at the throats of defenceless families at the South, men, women, and children, in their isolated and unprotected condition, but at the general and august Congress in their capitol assembled, at the legislatures of the several States in their halls of discussion. When I become a traitor I shall take the bold stand, and (with just cause) the honorable stand, of the Nullifier. I hold to the just right of revolution, if there be just cause. But when I head a revolution, it will be one of constitutions, of general principles, of universal authorities and laws; not an attack on Harper's Ferry, nor an assassination of unarmed Southerners.

"I go into this matter with you, my beloved son, at a little more length than usual, because I believe the convulsion of the general mind has only begun. If the friends of freedom adopt false principles now, the mistake is fatal. One of two things will happen: either the Republican party will be utterly crushed under the odium of sustaining slave rebellion and southern assassination; or the Slave States, within two years, will set up a republic by themselves, a slave empire, fenced around on all its frontiers, and upheld in all its fortresses by bristling bayonets, gleaming swords, and thundering cannon."

But Mr. Foster's work was by no means confined to his public addresses. While not making pastoral calls to the extent that some ministers think necessary, and never so much as to satisfy some in his parish, he yet did faithfully what he could. So long as his health permitted, he was always at the service of the afflicted, or the sick, or the thoughtful. His family letters make repeated mention of his calling here and there in his efforts to counsel or comfort. He was accustomed to hold a weekly inquiry meeting, and seldom during this period of his ministry did he fail to have some seek him for religious guidance. The following note will show his intense desire to do good, and his tender, wise way of putting his suggestions. It is addressed to a friend who had just presented

him with a cane made of olive wood, from the Mount of Olives: —

“My Dear Friend,—Please accept my thanks for your very acceptable present. It is indeed a precious ‘memorial.’ In my walks over the historic hills around us, it will often bring to my mind that sacred mount where our blessed Saviour suffered in the garden for the world’s redemption.

“Thrilled as we are by Christ’s abode on earth, shall we not long, with humble and intense desire, for communion with Him in heaven? That this will be your final privilege I have long had no doubt. Pardon me if I ask my honored friend, if he might not, by the public acknowledgment of his Lord, lead some to that blessed Saviour who are now halting between two opinions?”

The friend to whom this note was written, then a prominent citizen well on in years, was led by such counsels to make a profession of religion, and subsequently became an ardent Sabbath-school worker and a deacon.

Mr. Foster loved and appreciated his people. His family letters are crowded with the warmest expressions of interest in his church and its individual members. He was at this time surrounded by strong men, who rejoiced in his strength, defended him from party aspersions, stimulated him to the noblest efforts by their appreciation, and by their public approval gave his efforts an influence through the city and northern New England, that these efforts, however excellent, could not have had alone. Edward Everett understood this element of strength when he was accustomed to gather the chief men of any community where he lectured on the platform around him; our forefathers understood it when they placed the elders and deacons in prominent seats around the pulpit. In Mr. Foster’s church were gentlemen of the highest standing in social, commercial, educational, and political circles, men known throughout the State. Their generous and enthusiastic support of their beloved pastor was an untold source of encouragement to him. He recognized the value given to a preacher’s words by the endorsement of a church of strong and well-known Christian men. As the years went by, one

after another of these superior men was lost to him. Some died; others removed from the city. Mr. Foster loved, trusted, and honored them all, and at every break in the circle of Christian friends gathered around him in his church, his heart bled and his courage sank. These passages from letters — one to parishioners about leaving the city, another concerning some who had left — show the warmth of his feelings as a pastor and a friend.

“*My very dear Friends*, — I cannot allow this letter, which sunders the tie of church fellowship between you and John-street Church, to go from my hand without one expression of our grateful remembrance of the past. In losing your presence and counsel we are truly bereaved. I miss you from the Sabbath services. It was the remark of a distinguished divine to his young clerical friend, — If you have only one highly-instructed and discriminating family in your congregation, and can preach so as to secure the approbation of that one, you will have a high standard of attainment before you, and a powerfully animating motive to study. I have had other great and solemn inducements to give myself to earnest application, — I trust I have not been insensible to their force, — but I have needed this. It has been to me an inexpressible privilege for eight years past, that I could preach to such minds and hearts, and be upheld by such counsels and sympathies, as those of Mr. and Mrs. —, and Mr. and Mrs. —. It would be idle for me to deny that I deeply feel my bereavement. God bless you, and reward you for your generous friendship to myself and family, and invaluable labors for the upbuilding of this church. The wisdom of your counsels and the blessedness of your influence will not be forgotten by any of us. The Sabbath-school and the Bible-class miss you. The conference-room and the lecture-assembly miss you. The social circle, in all its gatherings for mutual acquaintance, in all its plans for benevolent action, miss you. We miss you in our sanctuary, and we miss you in our parlors. We try to be resigned, for we know that our loss is the gain of others, and that the great, universal cause of human welfare still has the full benefit of your Christian toils.”

“Mr. and Mrs. — have shown to me great kindness. I knew their worth before, but the cordiality and generosity of their treatment of me, the inexhaustible fulness of their information, and the charms of their conversation, the perfect

ease and impressiveness of their bearing, the warmth of their interest in every good object, the nobleness of their principles, made apparent in all discussions, have given to me new convictions of the peculiar excellence of their character. Mr. — is more like N. W. Dewey than any other man whom I ever met,—the same poetic, sensitive temperament, seizing with quick and true apprehension the beauties of books, the sublimities of nature, the loveliness of an intellectual, spiritual, and philanthropic life, the same constant flow of cheerful spirits and of genial humor, kindling up often into keenest wit; the same ready and even extraordinary gifts of conversation and public speech; the same desire to make everybody happy that comes within his reach, and ability to do so. Mr. — has seen somewhat more of the hypocrisies of men, of the sins of society, and of public wrongs, than Mr. Dewey, and therefore is more severely indignant against them. I have not cultivated Mr. —'s acquaintance as I desired to, perhaps as I ought to have done. I had not time. I intelligently surrendered my social privileges and joys for the sake of hard study, and that I might reach a higher standard of sermonizing. I love my friends with a profound affection; I delight in their society, with a heart-felt joy. When I have leisure, and when my nervous headaches do not disqualify me for thought, I have no greater joy than conversation with my ever-indulgent people, and with my highly valued friends. If I could have crept close up to Mr. —'s heart, and, as a cherished, confidential friend, opened all the keys of his mind, I should have had a blessing such as I had in N. W. Dewey, and which, out of my own family and father's house, I fear the world has not for me again."

During this first pastorate in Lowell, Mr. Foster received communications from churches in many other parts of the country, who were desirous of obtaining his services. These communications seldom went to the extent of a formal invitation. Mr. Foster was not a ministerial coquette. On no consideration would he encourage churches to give him a formal call, that the fact might be blazoned abroad and his reputation be enhanced. He rather shrank from the least publicity in this direction, and was almost morbidly sensitive in regard to what he considered honorable dealings with other churches which might be looking towards him as a pos-

sible pastor. It was in this spirit that he wrote as follows to the Second Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, N. Y., after a committee from that church had listened to his preaching, and he had received assurances that there was every probability that the people would extend him a call.

“LOWELL, Feb. 6, 1856.

“*Dear Sir,*—Your letter of the 4th inst., requesting me to preach in the Second Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn, on the next Sabbath, was received last evening. Please convey to the session my grateful acknowledgments for this kind invitation. It will be impossible for me to comply with it on the next Sabbath. I have been sick during the week, and yesterday I was not able to sit up at all. Your invitation presents to me a very solemn and difficult question for my decision. I dare not dismiss it without prayerful consideration, and the advice of friends, some of whom are not in this city. Your letter causes me both surprise and grief,—surprise, that it should be thought possible by any that I should be able to stand in such a succession as that of Dr. Spencer; grief, that I feel entirely disqualified for so responsible and eminent a position. For years I have regarded Dr. Spencer as the most distinguished clergyman our country has produced since Payson, for his direct, wise, and successful efforts for the salvation of souls. On whomsoever his mantle falls, he should be an Elisha indeed.

“I know that my preaching for you one Sabbath does not make it certain at all that any abiding connection will be formed with your church; but I dare not take this first step unless I feel prepared to go further, should Providence open the door. I am exceedingly averse to any effort on the part of a minister to get a call from a distinguished church for the promotion of selfish projects of popularity and emolument. The church and people with whom I dwell have treated me with great generosity and Christian fidelity. It would be very painful to me to separate from them; it would be wrong for me to do anything to weaken their confidence.”

About the same time, he gave a similar response to a Presbyterian church in Philadelphia.

In March, 1857, there was extended to him a very urgent call from the First Church of Northampton, Mass. He felt quite inclined to go. He was pecuniarily hampered, and there

were some special anxieties that made a change agreeable. But his people rallied about him with a cordiality and heartiness that surprised him; they met his pecuniary needs; they protested against his going with an earnestness that there was no withstanding, and he declined the call. Of this call, and his action regarding it, he wrote to a friend in Northampton, before he had fully decided to give a negative answer, as follows:—

“LOWELL, March 24, 1857.

“*Dear and Honored Sir*,—I have received your very kind letter, and I return to you my unfeigned thanks. God has been gracious to me, to give me such a degree of acceptance with your people. I desire to praise Him, and to make an unreserved offering of myself once more to His most blessed service in the ministry of the gospel. I will not attempt to enumerate the arguments which move me to accept your call. They are many and weighty, and it may be that the voice of God is calling with them. If this becomes clear to my mind, my course of action is settled.

“Will you allow me to state, very briefly, the argument on the other side of the question? My reasons for first permitting the thought of change to enter my mind were mainly four: 1, Country air for the health of my family; 2, The payment of a debt occasioned by unforeseen sickness; 3, The opportunity to educate my children near home,—my son at Amherst College, and a daughter in the South Hadley Seminary; 4, Relief from too intense and protracted study. I have rewritten for this pulpit almost every sermon I had preached before. I have written most of the time for six months past two new sermons a week. I love study, and hope never to lose the habits of a diligent student; but for some time past I have overtaken my brain, and my health has been in danger.

“Shall I tell you what my people are now doing, and this without any prompting or solicitation of my own? They are rallying around me with a love and generosity which surprises and overwhelms me. They offer me the use of a house in the open air of the suburbs, free of expense, my salary remaining the same as now. They say I may repeat my old sermons, one every Sabbath, and that only one new sermon a week shall be required of me. They tell me that the union of feeling with regard to my remaining here is complete and permanent; that more than two hundred different individuals have attended my inquiry meetings, and a majority of them are hopeful converts;

that, if I leave them, I am scattering a great congregation, I am weakening an earnest church, I am wounding the hearts of devoted friends, I am staying the progress of an opening revival of religion. My dear sir, what shall I do? I did not anticipate anything of all this one month ago. I knew of no dissatisfaction among my people, and yet I supposed they would allow me quietly to go. My heart is torn with tumults. I know not where the path of duty lies. Bear with me, and allow me to ask for your prayers. My decision will soon be made."

After this matter was definitely settled, and Mr. Foster was again fixed in his work among his people at Lowell, overtures came to him from Columbus, Ohio, which, under different circumstances, he would probably have considered favorably. Regarding this invitation to Columbus, and one to St. Johnsbury, in his previous ministry, he wrote thus, years afterward, to his father: —

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Feb. 20, 1865.

"I am sometimes overwhelmed with amazement when reflecting upon God's plans for us all. How inscrutable are His counsels! How surprising often the connection of causes and consequences, as we trace them in their unforeseen developments! After I had agreed to settle in Pelham, I received a letter from St. Johnsbury, Vt., inviting me there to preach. If the letter had come five days sooner, I should have accepted the invitation, and should never have known Lowell or West Springfield, should have had a history for myself and family very different from the present. In 1858, when I had been in Lowell six years, I received a letter from Columbus, O., inviting me, in behalf of the only Congregational church there, to settle with them. Yesterday, I preached in Agawam, and met there the gentleman (then and now resident in Columbus) who conducted the correspondence with me in behalf of the Columbus committee. He gave me an account of the history of the church, and the history of the movement which sent me the offer. Columbus, the capital of the State, midway between Cincinnati and Cleveland, lying in the Scioto valley, one of the richest agricultural regions of the whole commonwealth, is advancing with almost unparalleled rapidity in population, enterprise, wealth, intellectual power and influence. It gathers in the best young men from all quarters. Ten years ago it had twenty thousand population, now it has thirty-five thousand.

The Congregational church, then a new and feeble organization, was opposed by four strong Presbyterian societies; now all is harmony and co-operation. They have a new and splendid church edifice, crowded in all its seats; they have a Sabbath-school of seven hundred scholars; they are drawing in very largely the young, and the intellectual, and the energetic, — the elements of progress and power. Their knowledge of me came in this wise: They had written to Rev. Dr. Storrs, of Cincinnati, and Rev. Dr. Bouton, of Concord, N. H., and Rev. Dr. Thompson, of New York, for a New England man. Every one of them sent my name. At that time, two of my parishioners, and another friend, then on a journey to the West with their families, stopped in Columbus. The gentleman who wrote to me had an interview with them. My parishioners were reticent as to the probability of my leaving Lowell. The other friend expressed the firm conviction that I would leave. They all spoke in friendly terms of my qualifications for Columbus. I rehearse this history, not by way of complaint, but to show how God is leading us in unknown paths. If I had foreseen, nine years ago, what was before me, I should have accepted the Columbus offer. It would have changed the entire history of the life of some of the members of my family, if not all. 'Man proposes, but God disposes.' We need more faith, importunate prayer, humble waiting, holy obedience."

Not long after these questions of removal were decided, there began to be a great work of grace among the John-street people. In 1857 and 1858, the latter that memorable year of revivals throughout the country, the John-street Church was wonderfully quickened and blessed. There had been other revivals before this, notably one in 1854, when good old Dr. Lyman Beecher, leaning on the top of his staff, came up from Boston and preached evening after evening, and assisted in the inquiry meetings. At this time Mr. Foster had the great joy of receiving his two eldest children into the church. But the revival of 1858 was even greater in its effects. Of it Mr. Foster wrote a full account, as a report at the annual church meeting. This report, given below, is taken from the church records.

"God in His great mercy has blessed the church with a revival, apparently a continuation of the work of grace enjoyed

during the previous year. Fifty were added to the church in 1857, and the same number have joined our communion during the last year. The pastor has had conversation on the subject of personal religion with eighty anxious inquirers. About thirty, who give hopeful evidence of piety, have not yet united with the church. During most of the year, six prayer-meetings have been held each week, in addition to the three regular services of the Sabbath, the weekly lecture, and the weekly inquiry meeting. The Sabbath congregation has been large and marked by great thoughtfulness. The eager attention and the starting tear have not infrequently given attestation to the presence of the Divine Spirit applying to the conscience the word of God. The revival has showed pre-eminently the power of prayer. It has been to the Christian heart thrilling and encouraging in some of the prayer-meetings, to hear the voice of fifteen and sometimes twenty or more young converts following each other successively in earnest supplication for God's blessing upon themselves and others. Most interesting meetings have been occupied almost entirely by prayer from lips before unaccustomed to pray, when the spirit of fraternal affection, of solicitude for souls, and of a dependence upon Christ, has been remarkably manifested. The Sabbath-school, in its weekly lessons and in its monthly concerts, has awakened almost universal interest through the congregation. Teachers have been faithful in personal conversation with their pupils. The Bible-class has been largely attended, and marked by earnest and profound discussion. We have occasion for earnest gratitude to God when we remember that all these months have been characterized by the quickened thought and deep emotion of Christians, as they have pleaded with one another to be faithful, and as they have wrestled with God for His blessing; by the anxious inquiries of awakened souls, to whom impenitence and unbelief have assumed the aspect of deepest crime; by the modest yet earnest and most impressive testimony of young converts, proclaiming the blessedness of their experiences and the sacredness of their purposes. We would render to God our thanksgivings, and take courage to press forward in Christian attainment and Christian action."

In addition to the above, the following extract from a letter to his daughter Emily is not without interest:—

"Friday night fourteen were examined, and yesterday they were propounded for admission to the church,—by letter, four;

on profession, two ladies and seven young men. Miss —— came to see me Thursday evening, and related, with many tears, her distress. She is a young girl of some fifteen years of age, appears deeply in earnest, and intelligent in her religious hopes; she is very desirous to unite with the church, but her parents utterly forbid. It is an unusual case, and a very hard one for the gentle, amiable young convert who is thus early to pass through one of the severest furnaces of affliction. The result upon her religious character may be calamitous, — it may be refining and improving. Twenty-two young men were at the prayer-meeting last evening. Eighteen of them led in prayer. Two of them spoke before a vestry full of people in the conference-room. One young man says ‘he expects soon to be left alone in his life of irreligion.’ He is evidently calmed down, though he does not acknowledge it, into thoughtful, surprised, anxious consideration. What hath God wrought! Let us cease not, my daughter, to praise Him. Let us cease not to pray!”

Two children were born to Mr. Foster during this period of his life, — a son, Bela Edwards, named for Rev. Bela B. Edwards, a professor in Andover while Mr. Foster was a student there, and greatly admired by him; and a daughter, Ellen Burroughs. The former died in the spring of 1857, to the great grief of his parents. A note to a friend thus announces the fact:—

“MARCH 16, 1857.

“We have just been called, in the holy providence of God, to suffer again a great bereavement. We have laid a darling boy, named Bela Edwards, of three and a half years of age, in the grave. He was a pleasant child, an affectionate, sensitive, thoughtful young soul. As if angels prompted him, his heart turned even in his health to prayer, and more than once he was found on his knees supplicating a blessing, in his childish phrase, for every member of the family by name. A dozen times a day he would come to my study door, and rap, with the salutation, ‘Papa, I have come to make you happy.’ I hope we are resigned, but our home is lonely and desolate. I can think of little else. My heart swells and sinks at the recollection. The stormy billows go over my soul. It is the Lord, and I desire to kiss the rod, and hear its voice. But the affliction is one which sweeps me away sometimes with its tide of grief.”

There were now left to him in the latter part of this Lowell pastorate, but three children,—one son, Addison, pursuing his studies at academy and college; and two daughters,—Emily, the elder, a part of the time away from home at school, and Ellen, the younger, still a little child about the house. Of these children he was exceedingly fond. There was no self-denial he was not ready to make for them; at no moment were they out of his thought. To those away from home he wrote frequently, and at much length, the most thoughtful, affectionate, and helpful letters. Many a time, after coming home Sunday evening exhausted by the labors of the day, he would sit down and write to son or daughter a long letter; because, as he would say, his heart was full for them, and the morrow would bring its duties which would prevent his writing. He determined that they should enjoy every facility for education, and after giving them all the advantages which the excellent schools of Lowell afforded, he sent them forth to higher institutions of learning, to follow them with his prayers and loving reminders of his care. It is impossible for youth to comprehend the intensity of parental love, and little, comparatively, did those children then understand the unselfish and overmastering devotion of their father to their best interests. They loved him well, and sought to show their gratitude by lives that should please him; but how little did they see of the high resolve and tireless affection that prompted his every word and act! They have now some perception of all this, and as they drop a tear while they recall that noble life, they are comforted in the thought that they can here record their gratitude.

During the years that now began, and never ceased, of separation from his children, Mr. Foster was constantly manifesting the warmth of his heart in tenderest expressions of love. Some of his letters to his children, his wife, and his father may properly be introduced here, as showing what he was as a father, husband, and son, and as indicating that cheerful and sometimes humorous vein which was too often obscured by the drift of clouds of anxiety which would at times hang over him like a sea-fog, hiding everything pleasant in his

life. The following was written just after his return from a vacation :—

“LOWELL, Southwest Study, Nice Old Spotted Table,
Thursday, 4 o'clock, P. M., Aug. 26, 1858.

“*My Dear Wife and my Daughter Emily*,—You see we are once more at home. The trees wave in the wind, as of yore; the beautiful and brisk canal rolls as it did; the sunlight glances through the leaves; the green grass and the flowers send up their beauty and their odors to our senses. The distant roll of wheels and the busy hum of labor come to my ears, reminding me of my city locality, without encroaching at all upon the pensive, steady, unbroken train of my thought. We have forsaken the green fields, the rolling river, and the silent wood,—now once more for work. Dear and holy and precious memories come back to me in my beloved home. God be praised for the guardian love and beneficent care that have led me on through various changes, through depressing scenes, and given me such a home. Praise to the Lord for the confidence, and love, and prayers of my people. Thanks to my Heavenly Father for the jewels of my home, for the beloved, blessed boys, once in our arms, now cherubs in Heaven, given to us in mercy, snatched from us in mystery, never, never to be forgotten, and never to cease through God's grace, the imparting of heavenly influences to aid us in duty and to draw us upward. May we be sanctified through their loss, and may we be prepared to meet them in the pure and happy world where they have gone. This is my daily prayer. Praised be God for the generous and beloved friends he has given us in our birthplace, and in every place of Christian labor where Providence has cast our lot. I know not that we have an enemy at Hanover, at Pembroke, at Henniker, at Pelham, or at Lowell. And last, not least, I desire to praise a God of love for this revival of religion, which still continues with undiminished interest.”

The extracts which immediately follow are from letters written to his daughter Emily while away at school.

“WEST NEWBURY, MASS., Aug. 14, 1858.

“*My Beloved Daughter Emily*,—I propose to commence a correspondence with you, which I trust will continue many, many happy years, and will be to you and to me a source of refreshment in our weary cares, and of strength and joy in our various duties. I do not expect to equal in my letters

the wonderful ease, variety, and appropriateness of William Cowper, the poet and the model letter-writer. But I do expect that you will equal some of the famed lady letter-writers. To excel in letter-writing, it is necessary to possess readiness of mind, fertility of thought, command of language, combined with practice. You will have more leisure than I shall, and I doubt not that your side of the correspondence will surpass your father's. Shall I pursue this letter somewhat in sermon shape, and divide my discourse into heads, as follows: 1, Our amusements; 2, Our work; 3, Our diet; 4, Our health; 5, Our love."

"I rejoice, my dear daughter, that you are in such a cheerful and hopeful mood. I know that your mental industry, your pleasant society, and the high themes which occupy your thoughts, are calculated to lift you up above despondency. An untenanted house goes to ruin faster than one that is lived in. A flute or a violin that rests unused in the closet will decay far more rapidly than one which discourses sweet melodies every day. So I believe that a body which is kept in tune by the thoughts of an earnest mind, and by the emotions of a noble soul, is more likely to be healthy and happy, than an idle, sluggish, pleasure-loving body. If you avoid exposures, and get comfortable sleep, I think your studies will exhilarate you and fill you with hope, and, by the reaction of mind upon health, will strengthen you physically. May God grant it, in His great mercy and kindness! It gives me the deepest satisfaction, my dear child, to find your religious experience so true and intelligent. I am glad your teachers are such as to lead you constantly onward in the divine life. O, my daughter, how great is the privilege of loving and serving Christ! Shall we not consecrate ourselves to him anew? Shall we not resolve to spend and be spent for him, and thus find our highest joy?"

"LOWELL, June 22, 1859.

"*My Beloved Emily*,—My address to the Theological Society still drags its slow and lingering length along, but nevertheless I must part company with it for a little while, and talk with my dear daughter. My desire for usefulness is pretty strong. My longing for more intellect and more knowledge is a constant and urgent motive. My ambition for distinction is quite as influential as it should be, although I have surrendered a good many ambitions which I entertained when a young man. But I have not named the master-passion of my soul. What do you think it is? Perhaps you have guessed it. Ah, it is

love, love for my darling children. One of them (do you know which it is?) thinks she is not as good as the rest. Well, she is good enough for me. Do you think I want an angel around, when I am such an imperfect, inadequate creature? No, give me one for a daughter and a friend who is not too good for life's daily wants and toils, for 'loves, joys, kisses, smiles, and tears.' Give me one who is a woman, too, as well as a little bit of an angel, who sees her faults, and feels her failures, and longs for improvement, and does not shame poor me by her too exceeding excellence. Give me one for a daughter and a friend who can share my sorrows for shortcomings, and sympathize with me and help me. Give me one who loves her Saviour, and hates sin, and pants for spirituality and intellectuality; one who is to be an instrument of salvation to souls, an honor to her sex, a blessing to the church and the world; one who, through the Redeemer's grace, is yet to be an angel, bright and beautiful and strong. Give me such an one, and such an one is my Emily.'

"SABBATH EVE.

"*My Beloved Emily*, — I suppose it wrong to write secular letters on Sunday. But a father may write to his daughter, a minister may write to a member of his church, a Christian may write to a fellow-Christian on Sunday, provided the motive be a desire to promote the spiritual welfare of the correspondent, and the theme be one corresponding with the motive and worth of the day. I have thought of you and prayed for you, my precious daughter, more than once or twice this day. I am greatly saddened to learn that you are sick. I suppose you have not been able to go out to meeting to-day. Have you had a joyful meeting with your Saviour in your room? Have you received a new pledge of His gracious pardon, and new evidences of intimate communion with Him in His word? Your Saviour hears your prayers, and will surely answer you. He will not break the bruised reed, he will not quench the smoking flax. When your heart is desponding and seems like the reed bowed under the storm, when your faith is faint, and seems like the spark just ready to die, He will pour the balm of consolation and healing upon the bruises, He will kindle with the breath of His love the decaying flame, and give you beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Take heart of courage, my afflicted child, and trust in God your Father and your Redeemer. He loves you, and will love you to the end. Renew your hope, reconsecrate yourself to His service, and He will enable you to serve and glorify Him.

"My subjects of preaching to-day have been — 'The Effect of Paul's Preaching before Felix,' and 'The Character of Abraham.' I spoke in the latter sermon of the influence of hardship and affliction upon Christian character. The noblest Christians are those who patiently endure; the most useful Christians are those who glorify God in suffering. Christ's most precious grace is granted in our distresses. I think, my dear Emily, that you are likely to learn experimentally some of these lessons. The trial of your faith is much more precious than that of gold. It is my daily prayer that you may be saved from suffering, and restored to firm and permanent health. It is my constant prayer, that while lassitude and pain afflict you, you may have unfaltering hope and undecaying patience, a calm, sweet, holy, childlike trust in your suffering Saviour. May God keep you and bless you evermore, my Emily."

"NORTH BECKET, July 19, 1860.

"By all that is admonitory and the source of anxiety in my own health and the health of my very dear family, I wish to be instructed, made thoughtful, watchful, spiritual. I hope that I am better prepared to die than I was ten years or five years ago. My meditations turn often to this theme. It is a question that has been shrouded through most of my lifetime with darkness and uncertainty. Am I prepared to die? It has caused me, at times, untold agony. I trust, with trembling and humility, that my spirit is changed more and more, and with some advances, into the image of Christ, and into that faith, spirituality, and purity which constitute a meetness for Heaven. I think I could lie down on my dying bed with more composure, and with more unfaltering confidence in the mercy of my Redeemer, than ever before in my life. I have been reading, during this intermission of my labors (it has been almost the only reading to which I have given any thought), the Memoirs of Henry Kirk White, of Bela B. Edwards, of Bennet Tyler, of three sisters (a fragrant bouquet of heavenly flowers growing on one stem), Lizzie, Abbie, and Fannie Dickerman, of Mt. Carmel, Conn. I have been edified and benefited. No class of books refresh and quicken and exalt me more than these spiritual biographies. I never grow weary of going over the history of the useful and beautiful lives and the death-bed testimonies of eminent saints who are now praising God above, and whose record and influence will live immortally below. My dearest daughter, let us strive to live so that death shall find us with our lamps trimmed, with our feet shod, with our robes of preparation and glory on."

A few other letters may be added. This written in vacation to his wife:—

“WEST NEWBURY, Aug. 18, 1858.

“As we were on the water yesterday, we heard the cannon booming at intervals all day long, and we knew, before we reached home and saw the evening paper, that the Atlantic cable was sending its thrills of thought and international harmony back and forth from shore to shore, thus binding, as we trust, twice thirty millions of Saxon souls together in eternal league. If I were at home I should write a discourse on this great event.

“This loafing about, trying to kill time, seeking only to sniff the air, to exercise the muscles, and to consume food, is not favorable to the health of my soul. I feel as if I were going down rapidly into barbarism and Old Night. My face is already cooked by sun and air until it is as red as a lobster. I have lost my shivering sense of cold. I feel as if I were a woodchuck fattened on clover, just ready to go into a hole and hibernate for six months to come. This sort of life is a distress to me. I feel very lonesome, and would that A. and I could be with the loved ones of the happy home.”

“SEPTEMBER 1, 1858.

“*My Dear Wife*,—I wish I could be with you on that beautiful hill above your father's house, and look off with you on that sublime, variegated, and wonderful landscape. I may or may not stand with you on that hill. But there are Delectable Hills of Faith and Hope. Shall we not stand together there? There are hills of perennial verdure above, ‘sweet fields beyond the swelling flood.’ Shall we not join hand in hand, parents and children, and one and all stand on the beatific summits, and walk those heavenly fields, singing with accordant voices the praises of our Redeemer, God?”

The following letters are to his son at college:—

“PITTSFIELD, June 24, 1860.

“*My Beloved A.*,—I left home Friday morning, spent one night and day at North Becket, reached this place last night at nine o'clock, have preached twice to-day, with a good degree of comfort, and have addressed this evening a meeting-house full of children on the subject of temperance. I am tired, but I cannot forego the pleasure of a short epistolary talk with my dear son. I had a pleasant but somewhat tedious ride from

Lowell to Becket, for the express train took me to Springfield, and there I had to wait six hours. I had ample time to glance at the papers, read of the quarrels and intrigues of politicians, and meditate upon the multiplied slips which happen between the presidential cup and the political lip. Last night, about midnight, I was awakened by the 'thundering gun's explosion.' A cannon was fired a hundred times,—greatly to the discomfort and distress of sleeping inhabitants,—I suppose by the jubilant Douglasites. Well, the result of this quadrangular presidential contest will be, whoever is elected, to give our republican institutions a more severe trial than they have ever undergone before. As I came, on Friday, to the summit of the Berkshire hills, I was greatly struck with the exuberant beauty which God has scattered abroad over the world. The towns of Lancaster, Clinton, West Boylston, Worcester, West Brookfield, and Springfield are eminently attractive. Bedecked with yellow daisies and red blossoms of clover, smiling in the dew-drops, laughing in the sunshine, rejoicing in their gay mantle of green, they seemed fitted for habitations of innocence, like Eve's before she fell. I could not but think if the heart of man corresponded to the smiles of nature, in many of these gardens of New England, how happy would be the world we live in. As we crossed the majestic Connecticut, with its broad savannah of fertility, and then followed up the gentle Agawam through its quiet and rural nooks, I was impressed with the resemblance between that changing river, and the life of an ardent, aspiring, advancing young man. The Agawam, starting from the Becket hills, is for many miles a rapid and variable stream; now shallow, then deep; now meandering and slow, then straight and swift; now dancing, with noise and battle, over the rocks, then still and smooth, as it slips on level ground, between flowery meadows, finally expanding, like a thoughtful, instructed, sanctified mind, with broader current, with deeper flow, with more still, unnoticed, yet resistless force, with an ever-extending shore of luxuriant meadows and glorious leaf-crowned hills. So may the life of my dear boy flow on, gay and cheerful in its happy morning, deeper, stiller, richer, more widely felt in its noonday abundance, sweeping in majestic strength and peerless beauty to the ocean of a happy eternity, where at last old age shall bring in its close.

"By the way, have you read the 'Beauties' of John Ruskin, a very remarkable writer on architecture, painting, and the works of nature? In my view, his best passages go much beyond De Quincey in his power to interest and instruct. I

have read, this evening, his article on Mountains. Read it; it is grand as mountains themselves, and the book is full of such passages. I have read to-day a large part of the life of Rev. Bennet Tyler, D. D., president, first of Dartmouth, then of East Windsor Seminary. He was a man of godly simplicity and faith, of clear, pellucid thought, of manly, logical reasoning, of noble affections as a man, of power as a preacher, eminently blessed in winning souls to Christ. Such a biography cheers me, strengthens me, quickens me. I feed upon it as upon bread. I thank my redeeming God for the guiding light and stimulating help of such beautiful examples. God bless you, my beloved child! I am anxious to know if you are well and happy. Most affectionately, your father."

"LOWELL, Friday, March 22, 1861.

"*My Dear A*——, — This Friday morning opens upon us cloudy, dark, cold, bleak, dreary. The biggest snow-storm of the whole winter has just closed. Roads and sidewalks are thoroughly blocked with drifts. Limbs of trees and flower-bushes in the yards are heavily loaded with damp snow. The whistling, moaning, roaring wind pours down from the north-east. The desolate weather—winter precipitated into the lap of spring—would not trouble me, for I experience a deep delight sitting in a warm and cosy room, in gazing at the lowery sky, in listening to the keen, clarion tune of the angry blast, in watching the outdoor turmoil. But I feel very lonely. My wife is at Hanover, A. is at college, E. is at school, and I am left comparatively alone. I know that some think I am more fond of books than company, that I am never lonely nor disquieted, provided only I can have a library, reviews, and newspapers. There may be some ground of truth in this notion, but after all it is very pleasant to be able to leave the grim silence of the library and the study, and, when the brain is in a whirl with the multiplication of thoughts, to find friends in the next apartment with whom the mind can relax from the intensity of argumentative study, and throw off the burden of anxious care."

This letter is to his little daughter:—

"WILLIAMSTOWN, July 7, 1860.

"*My Darling Little Daughter*, — I owe you a letter, and I am going to pay you. I will pay you by writing this letter to you. I will pay you with ten smacking kisses when I get home. I will pay you by buying you a new book and a little

crockery dog. I will pay you by holding you in my lap, and praying for you and taking care of you when you are well, by watching with you all night when you are sick; by walking out with you on Dutton Street, and in the West Newbury fields. You will take care of your own dear papa when he is feeble, old, and blind, won't you?

"I love you, my N. Words cannot tell how much I love you, and E., and A. A thousand bushel-baskets would not hold my love and my anxious thoughts for my children.

"N., my dear little daughter, do you love the kind Saviour, who died to make you good and happy? He wants you to love him, for he says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.' Will you learn that precious little verse? The Saviour wants you to pray to him every morning and every night, and sometimes to go to papa's study, or mamma's bedroom, and kneel down there and pray. He can see you when the door is shut. He can hear you when everybody else is asleep. I have heard little birds sing this week in the mountain trees, gay and loud and long; they were praising God. But Christ loves to have little children praise him, a great deal better than the birds.

"Shall I tell you a story, for you are a little girl that loves stories? Sometimes you make your papa tell stories when he is very sleepy in the morning. But he is not sorry to have his little daughter ask for stories. He has said in his heart a thousand times, 'I thank Thee, kind Father in heaven, for giving me this dear little daughter, to wake me up bright and early. I thank Thee for her inquisitive mind, that is always asking questions and teasing me for stories.'

"Now for the story. I went out a week ago yesterday to fish on the pond. A big cloud came over the pond, and a great shower of rain came down. I had an umbrella, and did n't get very wet. It thundered loud, and I loved to hear it. I suppose the fishes thought they should get wet, so they swam out into the middle of the pond, and I could n't catch them. A fisherman who was with me caught a big one, which would weigh two pounds, but in pulling it out, it caught in a tree-top that had fallen into the water, and he lost it. An Irishman had been fishing all day on the pond, and I bought twelve pickerel of him. He had a little dog, and all at once we heard the dog barking out in the grass. We went to see what he had found, and it was a big turtle with a shell on its back, sticking its nose and its paws out of one end of the shell, and its crooked, scaly tail out of the other end of the shell. The dog had found it on its nest. This was a hole in

the ground about as large as a teacup. The turtle had laid seven white eggs in that nest. They were oval, and of equal size at both ends, about twice as large as a robin's egg, with a shell a little softer than a hen's egg. Poor turtle! I am afraid its nest got so much disturbed by a barking dog and a curious scholar that its eggs won't hatch out.

"I have found several birds' nests, some of them with pretty eggs in them, and some of them with little downy birds. I have found squirrels, ever so many. They would say, 'Chip-a-chip, chip, chip,' and run away as fast as their swift little legs could carry them. I think their names must be Nimble-legs, Long-ears, and Bunny. Did you ever hear about those squirrels? Last Monday, I found a partridge in the woods. I heard it stepping round on the leaves and making a cooing noise. Perhaps it had some little partridges hid under the bushes. I spoke out loud, and then it flew, with a buzz and a whir, as much as to say, 'Good-by, Mr. Stroller, I don't like to have you' come into my house to visit, so I will go to another room.'

"Good-by, my darling. Your very affectionate father."

In the year 1859, Mr. Foster accepted an invitation to deliver an address at Dartmouth College before the Theological Society. Although much worn from the protracted labors of the winter, he could not refuse any service which his beloved Alma Mater might require of him. The following extract gives an idea of the self-distrust and faithfulness with which he prepared himself for the occasion before him.

"JULY 13, 1859.

"*My Beloved Emily*,—I am about exhausted. For four Sabbaths I have done all the work for my own pulpit and people, and in addition have devoted every hour I could obtain, whether by night or day, to the preparation of my Dartmouth address. I have written and rewritten, added and amended, shortened and still amended, launched out on new topics without amending, and still feel utterly dissatisfied with it and with myself. My subject, as the address is now written, takes this shape: 'A Living Theology the Orator's Power.' My heads of thought are as follows: A living theology gives power to the orator for the following reasons—1. It produces a profound religious belief. 2. It inspires the soul with loyalty to truth. 3. It imparts simplicity of aim and style. 4. It

awakens deep enthusiasm. 5. It secures freedom of thought and action. 6. It creates a clear sense of moral obligation. 7. It proposes, as the great aim of study, regeneration. 8. It leads the orator to deal in persuasion, not dogmatism or denunciation. 9. It causes the orator to expect progress in knowledge. 10. It leads to systematic, logical thought. 11. It fills the soul with the power of a genuine philanthropist. I have written on each of these topics from twenty to thirty manuscript pages (large letter size), equivalent in all to about eight ordinary sermons. I stand aghast at my own presumptuous and voluminous inability."

The address came at a time when he was ill fitted for the task. Burdened with responsibilities, borne down by ill health, yet cheerfully accomplishing the regular pulpit and pastoral duties which devolved upon him, anxiously he carried out his promise. Concerning this address the Hon. James Barrett, of Rutland, Vt., writes:—

"At the commencement of 1859, Dr. Foster made the address before the Theological Society of Dartmouth College. It was worthy of the subject, the occasion, and the man. I mention this only as giving occasion for speaking of his sensitive and susceptible nature and temperament. He had been out of college twenty-four years, and had appeared as the speaker before all sorts of audiences, on a large variety of occasions, and was thoroughly accustomed to be greeted and held as the object of concentrated interest by 'the sea of upturned faces.' He had become fully certified of success whenever he appeared in response to a call on a special occasion. He had written and perfected his address by the use of ample time, and was familiar with it beyond any liability to embarrassment in the delivery; and yet, through the day before it was to be delivered, he was harassed with fearful foreboding as to his next day's performance, and was entirely sleepless through the night. This I know from what I observed and what he said to me on the occasion. I have understood that he was affected in this way throughout his public life. I knew in my intimacy with him, of his shrinking modesty, and of his nervous diffidence,—affecting him strongly even against his appreciation and judgment of himself."

Other letters are here added, not with special reference to events in his life at this time, but to illustrate the variety and

interest which always characterized his epistolary work. It will be noticed that many of these letters indicate that his health was becoming impaired by his constant and excessive toil.

“LOWELL, Jan. 17, 1859.

“*My Beloved A*——, — I write to-day with mingled sensations of fatigue and relief, of sadness and of hope. I preached yesterday the first entirely new sermon I have been able to write for two months; and this was written under great depression. For four days of last week I labored to get the first imperfect sketch of my sermon, and when I went to bed Friday night, I had not a sentence of the regular manuscript. My outlined thoughts and scattered facts seemed to me fragmentary and incoherent, and I was distressed with the fear that I should not be able to bring them into any completeness or order. I began to write early Saturday morning, and continued to write without intermission until the small hours of the night before the Sabbath (nineteen hours, taking out one for meals), when my sermon was finished. The subject of the sermon was ‘Woman’s Mission.’ It was one of my monthly series, and was an hour long. I think that Saturday’s labor was the hardest day’s work I ever accomplished. After such a pressure upon body and brain, I feel exhausted as well as relieved. Remembering my desperate and well-nigh futile efforts, for the last two months, to write, I feel greatly distressed, — sorrowful that I should be thrown into such a state of imbecility; fearful that these periods of depression and feebleness will return, and will kill me; thankful that God has at last so far delivered me as to enable me to write one more sermon.”

“PITTSFIELD, Saturday, June 30, 1860.

“Twenty years! It is a long stretch of time in one short life. I remember when I was ten years of age, pondering, one bright summer’s noon, in the mowing field, as I was spreading hay, well-nigh prostrate with fatigue, on the great and to me sometimes the dark problem of life. Should I sink under the burden of weary toil, or should I live to manhood? Should I get an education and have strength for study, or should I be doomed to mental stagnation, and perhaps to an early death? These were some of the questions on which I meditated at that early age, the farthest corner of the home lot, in a state of mind not very courageous nor sanguine. It does not seem a very long time since, with weeping eyes and

weary frame, I stood leaning on the top of my spreading-staff. I remember my mournful cogitations when I was twenty-one years of age, and was a member of the Sophomore class, having lost one year in college. I remember my tremblings and my misgivings, stronger than my hopes or my dreams, when at the age of twenty-eight, in the year 1841, I was ordained a minister of the gospel. I remember the depression under which I left Henniker for Pelham, and the partial encouragement under which I left Pelham for Lowell. I feel stronger in Christian hope, stronger in intellectual vigor, stronger in love for my work, and in courage and power to labor for Christ, than I have ever felt before. I trust that I am more fit to live, if God should spare me to labor in his cause, than I was twenty years ago. I trust that I am more fit to die, if in His holy Providence He should take me away."

"OCTOBER 26, 1860.

"The autumn leaves are falling. I have sat at my window for many days and watched them as the winds shook them down. Most of the trees in this beautiful Anne-street vista are now bare. A few evergreens stand untouched. A single soft maple at my west window, and four of the same species at my south window, wearing their delicate and inimitable orange hue, hold their frost-bitten leaves longer than other trees, and I never tire of looking at them. Nature, thou art an unmatched painter! Thou mighty God, how glorious, how wonderful are all thy works! The days we are now enjoying are mild and balmy as summer. The grains and the grasses and the fruits all garnered in, the autumn stores for winter comfort secured,—what a moving symbol is there here of a ripe old age, the old age of a devoted Christian; the toils of life accomplished, fruits for eternity gathered, with this joyful contrast, that there is no cold nor storm nor winter there, but for the child of God, His autumn lapses into an unbroken, everlasting spring. . . .

"I suppose in your sequestered nook, where the grand old hills shut you in, where scholarship holds on its quiet flow, where your communion is with the ancients of the world, and with principles older than time and nobler than princes, you have hardly heard the turmoil and the stir. Happy seclusion! Fortunate scholars! May the Infinite Guardian hold Williams College and all its precious inmates in His protecting care! Most affectionately, your father,"

"NOVEMBER 19, 1860.

"I rejoice with you that Lincoln is elected. I have no qualification to throw around this joy. 'T is a consummation devoutly to be wished.' It is a vindication of justice. It is a checkmate upon the extension of slavery. It is a new era in the history of the country. But it will be resented and resisted by the South. I fear the Southern Confederacy and the exasperation of passions and the strife of warring sections. It is not a time for Wide-awakes to brandish their torches, and lift their jubilant shouts. It is not a time for threats, nor scoffs, nor provoking words, nor cool calculations of war. We love our brethren. There is no hatred of the North against the South. I can forgive Wise, and Yancey, and Toombs, and Rhett, and Gist, and Magrath, and Cobb, far more easily than northern marplots. It is the time for wisdom, self-control, prayer, and conciliation. Yes, conciliation, while we adhere unfalteringly to the great principle of non-extension of slavery."

"LOWELL, Jan. 11, 1861.

"*My Dearest A*——, — I have been somewhat negligent not to write to you the first of the week, but the simple truth is, my whole soul is filled with alarm and distress on account of the portents of civil war, and it makes me sick. It takes away my strength for study and for writing. It interrupts my sleep and my digestion. It makes me nervous, anxious, bewildered. If possible, I shall have to turn my thoughts more to some other subject. You have observed, since the opening of the year, more men of thoughtful and scholarly minds have died than in any other fortnight since your remembrance or mine, — Hon. Judge Kent, of New York City, Rev. Dr. Anthon, of New York City, Rev. Dr. Hackley, of Columbia College, Rev. Dr. Haddock, late of Dartmouth College, Rev. Dr. Smith, of New Hampton Seminary, and Rev. Mr. Woodbury, of Milford. It is greatly alarming. And if the present condition of our country continues, or if it changes to actual war, and puts on garments rolled in blood, the mortality among men of active nature will be twofold more, in all probability, than it has ever been before. I suppose you have read Mr. Seward's speech. If so, you will admit that there is one man of political foresight, of comprehensive and powerful mind, of republican integrity, who has drawn a picture of the horrors of disunion and fratricidal strife, beyond any genius of painting which I have ever been able to employ in conversation with you. May God in His mercy deliver our unhappy nation from the gulf of barbarism and bloodshed into which we are plunging!"

A letter follows which makes reference to the terrible accident at the Pemberton Mills, in Lawrence, Mass., where a building suddenly fell to the ground, and scores of operatives were crushed beneath the ruins, or burned to death under the flaming timbers.

“The calamity at Lawrence is the most dreadful tragedy of the kind that has ever happened in our country. The burning of the theatre, many years ago, at Richmond, Va., the conflagration of the steamer Henry Clay on the Hudson River, the railroad catastrophe at Norwalk, when so many physicians were killed, the shipwreck of the Arctic, are the only events which approach it in loss of life and injury to limbs; but even they were less terrible. Some very affecting cases of fortitude and self-forgetful devotion occurred, enough to make us think more favorably of heroism and love of the human soul, especially when we read ‘the humble annals of the poor.’ The divisions of my sermon Sabbath morning, from Prov. 27 : 1, were these—1. Beware of a presumptuous mind. 2. Trust in an overruling Providence. 3. God never deviates from His established laws. 4. Unforeseen and instantaneous death is not necessarily a calamity. (It was not to Thomas Chalmers, nor to Arnold of Rugby school, nor to the regenerate ones who perished at Lawrence.) 5. Our only preparation for the swift assault of death is an immediate surrender to Christ. 6. The people of God are always safe. 7. God, by reiterated strokes, the death of great men during the last year, the John Brown tragedy and its results, and other calamities, is impressing upon the people of the land a sense of His displeasure and their imperative duty.”

But as time drew on, Mr. Foster’s health grew more infirm. It became plain to him that he must have rest, if not by absolute cessation from work, at least by a change in his field of labor. His brain was wearied, and he found it difficult to concentrate his thought on the matter in hand. His condition at this time is best indicated in a letter which he wrote to a friend concerning his disabilities.

“SEPTEMBER 6, 1860.

“You seem to suppose that my troubles arise from an unnecessary ‘self-depreciation.’ Now it may be that some of my sermons, which are actually written, I underestimate. They

never satisfy me; they appear to me almost always flat, stale, and unprofitable. I say this sincerely, and without fishing for a compliment. From the fact that I aim perpetually at a high standard, and that when I have finished a sermon I compare it with a high standard like the discourses of Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Wayland, Dr. Alexander, and Dr. Tyng, it may be that I am unduly aspiring, and, when I fail of reaching my high ideal, I am unduly distressed. I have sometimes thought that this was my fault and my misfortune. But whether this be characteristic of me or not, it is not the sorrow over which I now mourn. My present disability is of a different kind. It is an utter incapacity, during long and weary days, to do anything, that is, to produce any original composition of logical structure and of serious length. I can read a book of theology, or history, or poetry, and enjoy it. I think I could learn a lesson in Greek, or Latin, or mathematics. My memory works with a degree of activity. My faculty of understanding what others have written is present with me. My relish for study, for these branches of study, is no less than ever. But I have lost, in a measure, my faculty of original thought. I select a subject and attempt to develop it; my thoughts are chaos. I search for ideas, I call for them, I long for them, I painfully labor for them, I pray for them. I might as well 'evoke spirits from the vasty deep'; they do not come. Here is my sorrow and my despair.

"I know of no reason for my present incapacity except ill-health and over-work. For the last seven years I have doubtless kept the tension of my intellect, in sermon-writing, too protracted and too severe. I have pushed the pen through the day and deep into the night for successive days, week after week and month after month, with but small intermissions for food, or society, or recreation, or rest. Perhaps I am paying the penalty. I undertook to heal my malady by a several weeks' exchange with my brother, thus lengthening out my vacation to three months. During the first six weeks I thought I experienced improvement; during the last six weeks I did not. I am now no better than I was at the opening of summer. The autumn and winter, with their increased burden of study and toil, are upon me, and I am unprepared for them. I have less pain than I had a month ago. Still, at the close of every day of hard study, especially at the close of every Sabbath, I experience a pain in the side and a languor of the system (the result, I believe, of a disordered liver) which I did not formerly feel, and which are ominous of worse if not fatal derangement. But enough of this gloomy theme."

In connection with these difficulties was a partial paralysis of the wrist, caused by the incessant use of a steel pen. Of this he wrote in May, 1861: "Please excuse the illegible penmanship of this letter. My wrist is stiff and lame and full of pain. I am afraid my whole right arm will yet be paralyzed."

In June, 1861, he took a decisive step, and resigned his pastorate. Of this action he wrote as follows to his son:—

"LOWELL, June 11, 1861.

"*My Beloved A*——, — Once more I am adrift, — no longer pastor of John-street Church, but thrown upon the tide of unknown events, to be guided, I trust, by the hand of Providence to some safe and sheltering harbor. Last Sabbath, at the close of the afternoon service, I read to the congregation a resignation of my pastoral office, to take effect with the close of July. The paper is in the hands of the church and society. What action it will elicit I know not. A council will soon be called to give advice, and by authority to them committed, to dissolve my connection with this people, if they think it best. All the members of the church and congregation express profound regret at my decision. It is like tearing the heart-strings to cut myself loose from them. I love them with a deep affection. I am grateful to them for words of sympathy, and deeds of generosity, and Christian co-operation. If I was in the full vigor of athletic strength, and had the power to accomplish all the labors demanded for this great city congregation, no motive could draw me away from them unless signs of indifference on their part should appear, such as I have not seen. But my overtasked brain needs rest, and my debilitated frame needs exercise, and air, and regimen, such as I cannot secure in the necessary and constant pressure of my toils here. My heart is moved with strong desire for this dear people. My remembrance of them shall never fade. May God fold them beneath His sheltering wing! May He rain upon them the showers of His grace, and guide them by His counsel, and give them prosperity, and bring them at last to His glory!"

A council to consider his resignation met early in July, and adjourned to a later date. A letter tells the story.

"The council met last Tuesday, and adjourned without dismissing me. Mr. B. and others importuned for an adjournment, thinking the parish might be canvassed, an expression

made which would relieve me of all anxiety about old sermons, a sum raised which would meet all expenses of absence and of family support for a year, so as to give me a long rest, and bring me back with renovated health and restored courage, and the prospect of laboring here for many future years. I see no prospect of accomplishing any such result. The adjourned meeting of the council is next Tuesday afternoon. I had a letter last night from West Springfield. They expect me to preach for them three Sabbaths, beginning August 4. Providence permitting, I shall go there, and shall hope to find a field where sources of solicitude will disappear, where springs of health may be found, where opportunities of usefulness may open. God only knows what is before me and my family."

At the second meeting of the council, July 23, 1861, Mr. Foster was dismissed. The tie which had bound him to a loving, faithful people for eight years and three months, was sun-dered, greatly to their mutual regret. The following letters show with what feelings he left, and how he sought to comfort one of his sorrowing flock in the separation: —

"AUGUST 1, 1861.

"*My Dearest A*——, — I have nearly completed my preparations for leaving Lowell. One of the last things which I do in this dear room, which I quit now probably forever, and in this dear city where I have spent the most prosperous and happy portion of my life, is to pen a few words to you. My partings with the beloved friends and scenes, now left behind, are with infinite pain. If I had foreseen the extent of my distress, I should not have ventured upon the removal. I am lonely and desolate. I believe I have no bravery of soul. My roots are pulled up; it seems to me doubtful whether they are ever planted again. My lot, thus far in the ministry, has been somewhat peculiar. I have been tossed on ever-restless waves. In three different towns, in nine different houses, have I resided with my family, and now another upturn and overturn, the most mournful of them all.

"I preached at Pawtucket Falls, Sabbath day, with some degree of freedom, and a large impression of sadness. Some twenty or twenty-five of the John-street people were there. As it was probably my last Sabbath in this region, and my last address to any of this dear congregation, I felt well-nigh overwhelmed. May God keep me, for I feel at times as if both my head and my heart would break!"

“*My Dear Friend and Brother*, — Ministers are but instruments, some of them feeble ones. Your Saviour lives and reigns. He walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Shall not the John-street Church and Society lean upon Him? I believe He has a great blessing in store for you. It may come in an unexpected form, but it will come. Those minds of active force and large information, those hearts of warm sympathy and fervent prayer, those hands that have been so earnestly and so long employed for the cause of Christ, cannot combine their energies and consecrate them anew to God without important results.”

VII. — Pastorate in West Springfield, Mass.

1861 — 1866.

MENTION has already been made of the fact that, before Mr. Foster was dismissed from Lowell, he received an invitation to preach at West Springfield, Mass., with reference to settlement. He afterwards received similar invitations from West Meriden, Conn., West Bloomfield, N. J. (now Montclair), and some other places. But having already agreed to preach at West Springfield, he declined going elsewhere. He rigidly held himself in honor bound to settle the question of an engagement in West Springfield before looking in any other direction. He was at this time inclined to a country pastorate. A friend had strongly urged him not to think of settling with any other than an important city church, but he replied as follows:—

“You intimate a desire that I should seek a city pastorate. The advantages would be many, but the objections, to my mind, are conclusive. I doubt my intellectual ability, but we will not discuss that. I am not adapted in the temperament of my soul to such a place. The conflict of opinions and wills, the outdoor excitement, the platform rush, the mingling with crowds, the competition of churches and ministers, the demand for impromptu speech, the necessity of putting on a brazen face and an iron armor over the heart, all make it a place unsuited to my nature and my habits. The men are few who can make a permanent stay in a city. Dr. Spring, of New York, a great author; Dr. Tyng, a great extemporaneous

speaker; Henry Ward Beecher, a preacher of wonderful power; Dr. Adams, of Boston, a man of marvelous pathos of thought, poetry of style, and versatility of talent, — are nearly all the examples I can think of; and they, by remarkable good fortune, must be established in strong and rich churches which no mutation can shake. I think I understand my constitution, my ability, and my needs. No, the city is not the place for me. Give me a quiet, harmonious, strong, forbearing church, near to great centres and quickening influences, like that of West Springfield, and God has blessed me up to the height of my aspirations.”

With that entire absence of self-seeking which always characterized him, he afterwards wrote: —

“If the Lord will give me another home, with a comfortable support for my family, and with the prospect of permanency, I will covenant, I trust not rashly nor self-confidently, but in the strength of God, to labor on diligently till I die. Not rusting out, but wearing out, I will fall, prematurely, if it must needs be, but fall in the tracks where I am planted. Pray for me, for I sadly need the prayers of all who love me.”

In August, 1861, while he was preaching at West Springfield as a candidate, Mr. Foster received from Williams College the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity. It was a recognition that touched him deeply, and coming just at the time it did, it comforted and encouraged him greatly. Concerning it he wrote to his son as follows: —

“I notice in the morning paper one other item of news of special interest to you and to me. I value the honorary title of D. D., coming from Williams College, as of peculiar worth. From Williams have gone forth more than five hundred ministers, many of them eminent for scholarship and genius, nearly all of them endowed with sanctity and grace. Its halls and its groves have been made sacred by such as S. J. Mills and Gordon Hall. Its president, for the peculiar traits which fit him for the place, is the first man of New England. Its board of instructors win the confidence and the hearts of all the pupils. Its board of trust are wise, able, devout, faithful men. I deem it a privilege beyond the imprimatur of most colleges, to receive their theological honors. The title lays upon me new responsibilities and obligations. It shall be my purpose

prayerfully and studiously to gird myself for the duties devolving. God grant that I may have wisdom and ability according to my desire. I shall feel encouraged to press on in the labors of the ministry. Hearty thanks once more, let me say, for the approval of the trustees of Williams College, and for the magnanimous friendship of those men with whom I have so often communed in the sanctuary and the social circle, and to whom I owe so much."

Dr. Foster, according to agreement, preached in West Springfield, Mass., received a call, and was installed pastor there, Oct. 10, 1861. Of the place and the people, his own words give a graphic and admirable description.

"CHICOPEE FALLS, MASS., Aug. 5, 1861.

"My Dear Wife,—I have spent one Sabbath at West Springfield. The church is one of the old-fashioned structures, built fifty years ago, originally with square pews, high pulpit, and gallery stretching on three sides. It is modernized with lower pulpit, slips, and organ. It will seat seven or eight hundred persons. Between three and four hundred were present yesterday. The church membership is two hundred; the Sabbath-school about the same. The township is four miles wide and six miles long, more than one third of it consisting of river intervale, of richest soil and highest cultivation. The farms are exceedingly productive, and the owners of them are able to live in comfort and even in luxury, and that without as much hard work as some are compelled to perform. The chief crops are corn and tobacco,—corn for the supply of food, and tobacco for the accumulation of money. The appearance of the congregation is that of a staid, thoughtful, earnest, temperate, independent people. Their prayers, at the evening meeting, indicated that they had been trained by theological thinkers to a close, coherent, scriptural style of meditation, to appropriate, fervent, lucid, large-hearted supplications. There was no bungling in their style of expression; there was no leanness in their spiritual ideas; there was no lack of unction in the intensity of their petitions. Evidently it will require a devout, sincere, scholarly, strong-minded preacher to satisfy them. Such they have had in the past, and they are not likely to lower their standard.

"The town is composed almost entirely of one opinion. Politically, it is strongly Republican. Religiously, it is almost wholly Congregational; no Baptists, no Methodists, no Uni-

versalists, no Unitarians, no Atheists. The young people are staying at home far more than they did fifteen years ago. Fathers, with large families, are cutting their big farms into sections, and building a house for each of the sons, as he branches off with his own wife and children. There is hardly a house within the bounds of the parish, which has not some one individual, or more, who is a member of the church, and perhaps not a single house which is closed by prejudice or by unbelief against the visits and religious influence of the pastor. For a faithful servant of God, it is a field of rich promise, not in the brilliant show of the immediate hour, but enduring results of knowledge and piety, and in the eternal harvest."

The old West Springfield church was famous for its pastors, nearly all of them men of marked ability and of much note. He thus refers to them: —

"It is a delicate and difficult matter to follow such men as Rev. Dr. Hopkins, the venerable and the godly; as Rev. Dr. Lathrop, the learned divine, the wise counsellor, the witty and talented conversationalist; as Rev. Dr. Sprague, the facile writer, the eloquent preacher, the voluminous biographer; as Rev. Dr. Vermilye, the man of extemporaneous genius, business talent, and eminent knowledge of human nature; as Rev. Dr. Wood, of affable manners, of great efficiency in dealing with the young, of devoted piety; as Rev. Mr. Field,* literary, versatile, widely associated with learned men; as Rev. Mr. Hawks,* one of the first biblical scholars of New England. It is a task of infinite difficulty for me to stand in such a place, with such memories thronging upon me, and not feel that I am an insignificant creature, unworthy to tie the latchet of their shoes."

Dr. Foster and his family were received in West Springfield with old-fashioned hospitality by his new people. In a letter to his son he gives this glimpse of "sunny-side" life in the ministry: —

"The people have brought a cord of wood, a barrel of flour, pork, butter, cheese, eggs, potatoes, squashes, turnips, cabbages, beets, onions, sugar, tea, coffee, etc. etc., so that when we arrive we shall find all preparations for housekeeping and all sources

* Since then both these gentlemen have received the degree of D. D.

of comfort at hand. The people went with their teams and carried all our goods from Springfield depot to West Springfield on Thursday of last week."

A letter to his eldest daughter speaks of their happy entrance into their new home:—

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 3, 1861.

"*My Beloved Emily*,—Hail to you from Leafy Parsonage, henceforth our home! I write to you from the southeast chamber, sunshiny, warm, and beautiful. It looks out upon a pleasant prospect of garden and field,—no objects to distract attention, no noise to deafen the ear, no sight of deformity, no sound of sin, no sources of danger to oppress the mind. The soul is its own kingdom. My joys are within. My company is with books. My communion is with God and nature. My sphere of action and my social fellowship are with a calm, quiet, trusting people, who look little at show and much at substance, who are not whirled about in the turmoil of change, who are steadfast in their choice of pleasures and their pursuit of duties. Yesterday, after breakfast and dinner at Col. P.'s, we came to our home of beauty, built our fires, took possession (I trust with grateful hearts), and, after a night's rest, we commence the duties of this Thursday morning in the light of this bright and balmy October day, with hopes of cheerfulness somewhat akin to the calm joy of the external world."

When once comfortably settled in the beautiful parsonage, there came over Mr. Foster a great content. His health improved. His charming country home was greatly to his mind. His people were full of love and kindness. The clouds rolled away, and he worked more happily and easily than for years before. His whole pastorate here was for him an unusually happy one. This appears both from a letter written at this time to his son, and another to his father, written four years later.

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 4, 1861.

"*My Beloved A*——,—We are planted in our new and country home, on the borders of the pleasantest and most beautiful city of Massachusetts, a rural retirement not second in its attractions of comfort and loveliness to any other town; among a people tranquil, uniform, confiding, thoughtful, spiritual; in a

parsonage the most comfortable we have ever occupied; with a salary which, I trust, will keep our heads above the dark waves of debt, with a prospect of throwing off from my mind some of the terrible anxieties of the last year, and in this delightful scenery and free, pure air, of recruiting my shattered health. I once more pitch my tent and hope by God's blessing to accomplish something, for a little space longer, for the welfare of my family and for the cause of my Saviour. For two mornings the sun has risen in an unclouded sky over our heads, and from its first lift above the horizon to its meridian, it pours its full and cheering beams into our south windows. Thank God for the sunshine! I have felt the lack of it for a few years, and mean now to enjoy a full supply of it. It costs nothing, and is worth an infinite sum. Thank God for the breathings of these bright, embellished fields,—they are sweet, balmy, rich, healthful to the body, invigorating to the soul. Let me praise the Lord for these majestic trees, crowded with foliage, crowned with grandeur, the home of birds and katydid, the beautiful shade of happy children in their plays and of sequestered lovers in their rambles; for these spires of grass which suffer from no parching drought nor exhausting barrenness; for these pyramidal evergreens, keeping their glory through winter as well as summer, through storm as well as sunshine; for these beds of snow-drops and blossoming flowers, the fringe of adornment on all the garments of fertility. Let me praise the Lord, for he has made a beautiful world, and given me, at last, a beautiful spot in it. Henniker had many attractions, but it was not so symmetrical, nor leafy, nor exuberant, nor easy of traverse, as this dear valley. Its hills were rocky and steep and rugged. Its fields were some of them marshy, and some of them sterile, and none of them beautiful like these. Its people were good and dear, and some of them the worthiest and dearest of earth; but I hope to find Christians in this church, and friends in this grand old town, as noble and generous, as strong in their love to me and mine, and planted as deep in my affections as any of my early parishioners. Pelham was like Henniker, only not so attractive in scenery. Its plains were more of the dead sand, its hills were more cold and undrained. I would not speak disparagingly of the hills and valleys of New Hampshire, for I have loved to live among them and to wander over them; but they are not like this alluvial Connecticut river savannah. Of Lowell I can speak only with grateful remembrances and strong affections. It will take many a long day and many a lingering, longing, backward look before our hearts will be weaned from Lowell. There are

friends and Christian co-workers whom we found in Henniker, Pelham, and Lowell, from whom our gratitude will never waver, from whom our love will never be weaned. But Lowell is an endless succession of bricks, and I think an eternity of bricks is less desirable than an eternity of leaves. Lowell is a ceaseless babel of noise, and I think that an immensity of bird-songs is better than an immensity of bell-ringing and wheel-racket. I love the country. God made it, and man made the town. I love the quiet. My communion is with the great souls of the past, whose thoughts are embalmed in books, and, as I trust, with the high spirits of Heaven, with whom my fellowship and my joy are to be forever. I love stability and uniformity. The rapid and transient excitements of the city, the whirlwinds of change, confuse my brain and make me afraid."

To his father he writes : —

"If God spares your life, as we hope and pray, I doubt not you have much happiness yet in store. I think a serene, patient, thoughtful, trusting, religious old age is eminently desirable. I know of nothing more beautiful, not even childhood itself. God often seems to bestow, in old age, when cares are banished, and burdens are lifted, and sins are conquered, and fears are dispersed, the very sweetest joys of life. If I may judge from my own experience in advancing years, old age is fitted to be happy. I have a more anxious and sorrowful temperament than most, but I enjoy life, in some respects, more than I ever did before. I enjoy my garden, and the care of it, as I never did at the age of twenty-five or thirty-five. I enjoy the scenery that I behold around me in rides and journeys, — the beauty of the earth and sky, the richness of the hill-side, the meadow and the forest, the river and the lake and the mountain summit, more than I did in my younger years. I enjoy books and the conversation of thoughtful minds as much as ever. I enjoy my ministerial work (when I have health to feel that I can accomplish it) with a pure and deep satisfaction. Let us praise God for his mercies. Let us improve them for His glory. Let us urge our onward way to heaven, there to praise and love and serve Him forever."

He immediately took up his work with great heartiness, as these extracts of different dates will show : —

“NOVEMBER 4, 1861.

“I am very tired on this Monday, the minister’s weary day. I visited last week fifteen families, received some twenty calls, took the installing prayer at an ordination, attended the meeting of a church committee,—an occasion of large anxiety, as matters of church discipline came up for discussion,—conducted a funeral, spoke twenty-five minutes at the Thursday evening lecture and thirty-five minutes at the preparatory lecture of Friday, conducted extemporaneously the entire communion service yesterday, the first time that I ever did so, and spoke again twenty minutes last evening at a monthly concert. I have a funeral to-morrow, and visitations promised two days, and perhaps three, of the week, and a round of visits to be received. I am not idle, and do not expect to be, while life or breath or being lasts, or immortality endures.”

“APRIL 7, 1862.

“*My Dear A*—,—Pardon my silence of last week. I have been driven for the last fortnight at high-pressure speed. My Fast-day sermon was one hour and a half long, every word of it newly written. I had three funerals and three school visitations during the fortnight. I have delivered my discourse on ‘Self Culture’ twice during the same time,—once at Chicopee, before an audience of seven hundred, on Sabbath evening, March 30; and once at Holyoke, before the Teachers’ Institute, before an audience of a thousand, on Friday evening, April 4.

“Rev. Mr. C. has written me, saying his young men wish to obtain the whole course of sermons which I have delivered to young men. If I will go up the last two Sabbath evenings of each month, they will send for me and bring me home. My strength permitting, I shall undertake this extra labor.”

This course of sermons to young men he delivered as here proposed, in the neighboring town of Chicopee, driving over every Sunday after preaching in the afternoon to his own people. It was his custom to preach sermons in courses, delivering them one each month or fortnight. These courses invariably excited unusual interest, and by their continuity of thought produced a more permanent impression than his more sporadic efforts. Regarding one of these series he writes:—

"MAY 25, 1862.

"I have written during the week and have to-day preached the closing sermon of my series on 'The Women of the Bible.' The subject was 'Mary sitting at Jesus' feet.' It was the most directly and strictly religious of any one of the course. It is a relief to me to get through this labor, for nine of the twelve have been entirely new; and as the sermons are longer than ordinary, and written with more historical illustration and elaborate care than the majority of my discourses, they have cost me a good deal of weary toil. After all, if I can approach any nearer my ideal, I am repaid for all my studious and anxious painstaking. There is an exhilaration in the work, when mind and soul are deeply interested, and there is a joy in the accomplishment, when a finished sermon is produced, which more than repays me for the solicitude and fatigue. I have also a high hope of a useful result, although I may not discover any immediate, visible effect in the congregation. The present series has been kindly received. I hope it will have its effect in exalting the general ideas as to woman's duty and privilege, if it does not inspire any single mind with sublime aims of scholarly accomplishment and religious usefulness.

"I wrote a long sermon last week on 'The Character of Hannah, or the Influence of the Praying Mother over the Son.' Four new sermons within the last ten days, a sociable last Monday evening, a lecture at Tatham school-house last Wednesday evening, my usual Thursday evening lecture, a school examination Friday, visitations on the sick Friday and Saturday, are my excuses for failing to send you a letter last week. It was simply impossible, if I would preserve the two lobes of my brain from war and secession."

Yet with all these labors he found time to write letters of condolence, of friendly remembrance, and of counsel. He was frequently in the receipt of letters requesting his advice, especially from young men. To such letters he always responded most cheerfully. Here is a letter which he wrote to a college classmate of his son.

"JUNE 4, 1864.

"MR. J. G. D—— :

"*My Dear Son,*— Your letter of the 14th ult. gave me unfeigned joy. You have a warm place in my heart, and will have so long as I live. Nearly five years ago the fact that you were A.'s room-mate enlisted my strong desires for your wel-

fare. His friendship for you, his frequent descriptions of your characteristics and progress, your letters to him, your articles in the *Williams Quarterly*, awakened my esteem. My personal acquaintance with you heightened that esteem. I have known but few men who have won so entirely my love. I have great confidence that your life will be one of active, intelligent devotion to Christ, of beauty, power, and usefulness. I thank you most sincerely for your expression of friendly interest in me, and for the sympathetic and confidential tone of your letter. If there are any experiences of my life, or reflections of my mind, which may seem to you a help in reaching your own conclusions as to duty, it will be a true delight to me to communicate them to you. An interchange of thought with you at any future time, on any subject of general interest, will be to me a privilege. You ask my views of a call to the ministry. Probably I should not accept the ideas of many persons as to a 'special invitation from above.' The call of God to the ministry comes as it does to any sacred and useful work, by reasoning from ordinary facts and natural principles of law and duty. It is not an audible voice; it is not a miraculous sign; it is not a supernatural interposition in any other sense than this: the teachings of the Holy Spirit are always supernatural, to be obtained by holy meditation, spiritual living, much study, and much prayer. The qualifications for the ministry are special. If you have those, my dear young friend, you have the only special call which God gives since the days of prophets and apostles. The first of these is an eminent standard of piety, and a constant, strong endeavor to reach that standard. I cannot doubt that you have this qualification. The second is an education, liberal in the large and beautiful sense of the word, freeing the mind, not only from the weakness of ignorance, but from all vulgarity, prejudice, fanaticism, and cant. This you have. The third is the power of communicating knowledge, both by tongue and pen, so as to interest and thrill a public audience. This you have. The fourth is a passion for souls, so that you feel that the great object of your life is to save men from spiritual death, and so that the pressure of motive is so strong upon you, that you are compelled to say, 'Woe is me if I do not consecrate myself to this object.' The fifth is a willingness to make important sacrifices for the privilege of leading men to Christ. You must reckon up beforehand the cost, and be prepared to take your pay in heaven. If you have that amount of genius and toil and adaptation to the different professions which I believe you possess, you can acquire more money and more fame in the law, more money and an

equal amount of fame in the medical profession, more fame and an equal amount of money in a professor's chair, more money if not more fame in journalism, more fame if not more money in authorship. A few men—eloquent preachers like Dr. R. S. Storrs, Jr., powerful theologians like Dr. Nathaniel Taylor, sagacious biblical interpreters like Dr. Edward Robinson—may acquire both fortune and reputation from their religious labors; but the usual lot of ministers is to be poor and unknown. When I say poor, I do not mean beggars, but deprived of many comforts and privileges which riches give, and obliged always to practise close economy. When I say unknown, I do not mean that the faithful minister is not eminently beloved and honored in a limited circle, but that he is destitute of a wide public reputation. The vast majority of ministers must wait till eternity shall give them riches and renown. This is the question for the young candidate to settle, Am I willing to surrender affluence and honor for the sake of saving men? If you have the other qualifications I have mentioned, as I believe you have, and are ready to answer this last question in the affirmative, I think, my dear Mr. D., that God calls you to the ministry. It is a sacred, noble, blessed work. Its toils are arduous, its trials many, its responsibilities sometimes crushing, its joys unsurpassed. Christ invites your co-operation; souls need your help; infidelity and error and sin, with malignant and mighty strokes, are battling it for the supremacy; truth, wounded and bleeding, faint yet invulnerable, cries out for succor. The harvest is great, the reapers are few. It shall be my constant prayer that God will give you wisdom and grace to decide this momentous question aright."

Shortly after beginning his work in West Springfield, Dr. Foster wrote this long and affectionate letter to an aged and honored deacon in John-street Church.

"DECEMBER 11, 1861.

"DEA. AND MRS. W.:

"*My very Dear Friends*,—I did not think that two months would pass before I should write to you, and disclose the emotions of a heart full of gratitude to you for your kindness and full of esteem for your many excellences. It is a most unfortunate feature of the minister's lot, that, on account of failure of health, excess of labors, falling-off of support, he is liable to be torn from the endeared associations where all his affections are planted, and, in his feebleness and hopelessness, to be compelled to go through the multiplied toils and

solicitudes necessary to find a new home and to gather new friends. In all my changes God has graciously favored me. I leave dear friends behind; I find efficient and generous helpers where I go. But it is painful to make the transfer. There are wounds of the heart; there are disappointments of hope; there are labors prematurely ended. Memories, dear indeed and blessed, but still memories only, must be substituted for rich experiences. Bright anticipations must be given up till eternity shall readjust the dislocations of earth, and heaven shall bring together the parted. I entertain no shadow of doubt as to the necessity of my last exchange of pulpits. I have found a warm-hearted, intelligent, noble people; but you will not think it strange, and no sensitive, understanding heart will blame me, if I say the sadness of my parting with the John-street people is still fresh as in the day of my removal. I remember those improving interviews with high-minded friends; I remember those conferences and prayer-meetings, where the thoughts were instructed by opportune remarks, and the heart was lifted up to God by believing supplication; I remember those social circles, where geniality, vivacity, warmth of friendship, refinement, good sense, large information, were so conspicuous; I remember those Sabbaths of Christian aspiration, and thoughtfulness, and praise, and prayer; I remember those deceased members of the church, with whom we had often taken sweet counsel, who went from us in the triumphs of faith, and who cease not, we fondly believe, to feel an interest in the prosperity of the church and the welfare of friends they have left behind. I remember the invalid sufferers, cut off from many social and earthly privileges, but recompensed by exalted spiritual joys. I remember with peculiar emotions the Sabbath-school concerts, and the children and youth there gathered, whom I have often addressed, and for whose salvation I have fervently longed. I could not forget if I would, — surely I would not if I could.

“Dear members of John-street Church and congregation, as well remembered and as dear to-day as in the day of my dismissal, as well remembered and as dear years hence as in the days of our intimate acquaintance! May God hold them all in the hollow of his hand, and bless them with all temporal prosperity and heavenly grace. There is one heart weighed down by a heavy sense of obligation, that will always long for their joy, and that is the heart of their late pastor.

“I said I had not found time to write. You will not wonder at this. I left Lowell for the sake of rest; but during the whole of my search for another home, and of my candidate-

ship here, rest was impossible. For the time being, anxieties were greatly multiplied, and the pressure of foreboding was heavy upon my heart. N.'s sickness, although it was alleviated by wonderful kindness, threw me into deep distress. The plant which is taken from its native soil, although it may be set in a luxuriant garden, droops for a time; so our hopes and strength, in the transit from Lowell to West Springfield, gave tokens of the fading of their brightness and the withering of their greenness. I believe we have not passed away from one 'sunny side' to encounter unbroken darkness. I believe that the summer will come, and that the bursting of buds and flowers, and the ripening of glad fruits, will yet greet our eye, but for a time autumn desolation seemed around us. It was not the fault of this admirable people, nor of this most beautiful place, — let me carefully avoid making such an impression, — but it was the fault of our own cherished memories and clinging affections, which would not easily be rooted out of their old place. My time since I came here has been very fully occupied. I have made more than eighty calls on as many families of my people; we have received at our house calls from more than a hundred persons. I have made new preparations for all evening meetings, held twice a week and sometimes three times a week. It is only within a fortnight that I have felt I had leisure for any calm review of the past, or any tranquil enjoyment of the present. Dea. W., my brother in the Lord, my Christian helper, my aged, venerated, dearly loved friend, how shall I thank you or reward you for all that you have done for me? I have felt that I could always lean upon you. At every meeting, if you had health, you were there; at every meeting, no matter 'though storms were in the sky,' no matter though agitations were shaking society, no matter though the church seemed in a state of decline and sinners were unconverted, no matter whether the attendance was small or great, whether the hearts of others appeared warm or cold, your help was prompt, your thoughts were quickening, your prayers were fervent. In all my debility, perplexity, despondency, and need, I found your counsels wise and your sympathies quickly rendered. The Lord reward you for your fidelity to your pastor and your devotion to the church. Not Aaron or Hur strengthened the hands of Moses more than you have mine. You deserve in the decline of your life, to cheer and hallow the remainder of your days, a pastor endowed with the wisdom of God and full of the Holy Ghost. May God grant to you and the church a minister of that type. I address you, Dea. W., by name, not excluding your family

from my grateful recollections, nor from my descriptions of Christian fidelity. I feel myself equally indebted to all the members of your family. My kind and generous and most estimable friends, my constant heart-throbs will beat in thankfulness to you and in prayers for your welfare.

“Very affectionately yours.”

The period covered by the great rebellion fell mostly within this pastorate. This terrible war had been foreseen by Dr. Foster long before it began, and had been often prophesied in his letters. In West Springfield, as in Lowell, as might have been expected, he took an active part, and exerted a wide influence in staying up the hands of the government. An extract from a letter to his son, dated July 25, 1862, gives most modestly a remarkable instance of his influence in the town.

“I have had a large amount of business on hand since you left. After the speech which I made on Monday evening, a committee of the town came to me to solicit a sermon for the Sabbath. I was unwilling, but they were urgent. They said volunteering had stopped. Every family almost had been visited by the committee, to procure enlistments, but in vain. If some public address did not awaken a new impulse of patriotism and self-devotion in this town, at least a compulsory draft would be indispensable. I put myself to my heaviest work, and by midnight of Saturday had a discourse prepared, entirely new, of an hour's length. Rev. Mr. P. and all his people came out to hear it. Another meeting was appointed for Monday evening. R. came over from Chicopee Falls and spoke more than an hour. Mr. P. made a very earnest speech, offering himself for the cause. The house was crowded full, galleries and lower tiers. C. played the organ. We had the music of clarion and trombone and drum, a band from Westfield. Our own choir sang very finely three anthems. On the whole I have not seen a more enthusiastic outburst of patriotism in any city or village. Franklin Smith, a member of the church, a selectman of the town, a young man of business talent and intellectual vigor, came forward and offered himself to the cause, leaving his twin babies, one year old, to the mercies of the Lord. Mr. Richards, one of the most promising members of our church, did the same. His feeble wife and two little children he committed as a sacred trust to the care

of friends. Mr. Bellows, an earnest church-member, leaving a wife and little boy; Mr. Chapin, long a church-member, leaving a wife and a family of children, both noble men, gave themselves to the country. Others followed. The quota of the town is nearly filled. We have given some of our best talent, integrity, and piety, and blood to the war. God save the Republic! I am still despondent of the cause. I have faith in the generals; I have faith in the army; I have faith in President Lincoln and his Cabinet; I have faith in the spirit of patriotic devotion which sways the people of the North. But we have all underestimated the military power of the South, the energy and science and genius of her generals, and the fierce, swift, death-dealing valor of her troops. We have on our hands an immense, deadly, well-nigh immeasurable undertaking. Our counsels are distracted. Contradictory theories are entertained and vehemently pushed by patriotic, instructed, antislavery men. We have no unity in Congress, nor in the public mind. We differ as to methods; we differ as to aims; we differ as to men. Success is made the criterion of merit. A slight disaster suffered by a general, throws him from his pedestal, looses a thousand slanderous tongues, smirches all his fair fame. No commander that ever lived, not even Washington, nor Wellington, nor Napoleon, could be judged on such principles, and still maintain his military strength. We are a fickle, changeable, excitable people, driven by the superficial gales of the hour, not by any settled, permanent judgment of measures or men. The Lord have mercy upon us!"

Another letter shows us his sentiments towards the soldiers, and regarding the war.

"We are drifting, in my judgment, more swiftly than the French nation ever drifted, into a war of factions at the North, and into all the terrors of a remorseless military despotism. But I turn from the mournful theme to say, that in the gloom and horror of the midnight, there shine out upon us bright and beautiful stars. I have been reading the life of Frazer Stearns, son of the president of Amherst College, a volume written by his father. It is a beautiful and touching memorial. You know my fondness for biography; and in the present hour of national anguish and national throes, I am turned irresistibly to battle scenes and battle thoughts and battle martyrs. We have lost twenty generals by battle wounds, most of them noble and admirable men, and one of them, General Mitchel, the

grandest character of them all, by the malaria of the South. We have lost hundreds, yes, thousands of officers, of different grades, who have beautifully lived and sublimely died. I am preserving sketches of them as fast as I can find them. If written out with care, it would be a list of obituary notices the most tender and thrilling the annals of the world afford."

In the spring of 1863, Dr. Foster, while engaged in sawing wood,—for he was indefatigable in habits of daily exercise,—fell on his saw-horse and dislocated his left arm at the shoulder. From this accident he suffered extremely for four months with constant pain. Being unable to write at a desk, he then contracted the habit, which followed him through life ever after, of writing on a tablet held in his lap. A letter is here inserted which was written by him while under this disability. It is valuable as showing the physical infirmities with which he constantly struggled, as describing his methods of pulpit preparation, and as referring to certain offers made him from Philadelphia at this time, and which, in his depressed and enfeebled condition, he was in no mood to consider.

"NOVEMBER 12, 1863.

"*My Beloved A*——,—I am still compelled to write, holding my paper in my lap, and granting to my feeble and well-nigh helpless left arm all possible favors. Rev. Dr. Sprague called upon me six weeks ago. He told me that he once dislocated his right shoulder, and, notwithstanding, kept on his customary writing day by day, and his customary preaching, without losing a Sabbath. Circumstances alter cases, or else other people's shoulders and nerves are very different from mine. It is sixty-four days since my injury, and I cannot now place a sheet of letter-paper on a pamphlet and steady it with my left hand, resting it on a pillow in my lap, without acute and constant pain. I undertook last week to write a sermon, but was obliged to desist in less than half an hour on account of absolute pain. I have not been free from pain during a single hour or half-hour of the last sixty-four days and nights. I live on patience and hope; but I confess that my sufferings sometimes encroach upon my patience, and clouds sometimes darken my hopes.

"I preached last Sabbath an extemporaneous sermon, writing only the heads and the conclusion, which covered one sheet

of note-paper. It is more than twelve years since I have preached in any pulpit, either of Lowell or any other town, a sermon so entirely unwritten as this sermon was. Perhaps this is the design of the Divine Providence in this affliction, which has seemed to me so mysterious, that I should be compelled to lay down the pen, and resort to unwritten sermonizing. The labor during the time of preparation and during the time of preaching also, is the most intense and exhausting form of brain-work to which it is possible for me to be driven. I have given to this sort of preparation for funerals, prayer-meetings, platform addresses, lectures, etc., years of the most tremendous application. I have very rarely made a five-minutes' or a ten-minutes' address on any subject, or anywhere, without studying it for hours. If I preach an unwritten sermon, I must go over in my soliloquies every division and subdivision, sentence by sentence and word by word, four or five or six times. You can imagine what the draft is upon nervous strength.

"I do not go to Philadelphia, first, because I think my labors there and the accompanying mental distresses would be more than I am able to endure; second, because my people here have given me most touching and generous proofs of kindness, and have forborne to press me in my weakness, and I owe them acknowledgments of love and labor. I have not been able to read much for the last two months. I take up a pamphlet and read half a page; I look over my bundles of extracts, and catch a glance at some interesting paragraph here and there; I read a short story of mingled tragedy and humor. I think of the pear-trees I have planted, and of the wonderful bell-shaped and golden fruits that shall hereafter grow upon them. I think of my children dead, and of my children living; of the bountiful qualities which have blossomed in their character, and which I believe shall ripen bountifully in time, and with glory and joy in eternity. I use all possible devices to recruit my weary, throbbing, and anxious hours, for, as I am not equal to consecutive thought, amusement is all I can accomplish, and this only with Sisyphus-rolling of the stone uphill. Good-night, my beloved. Pray for me still. Your father."

The great kindness of the people referred to in the extract above was a gift of \$300 made by them to supply the needs which came upon him in consequence of this accident, a gift which not only from its intrinsic value, but as an expression of

love, was most gratefully appreciated. But its preciousness as an evidence of esteem can be best understood from the heading of the subscription-paper which accompanied the gift. It was as follows : —

“We, the undersigned, members of the church and congregation of the First Parish in West Springfield, sympathizing deeply with our pastor in the protracted illness of himself and family, sensible of his largely increased expenses for medical and pulpit services, do most cheerfully agree to pay the sum severally set against our names, in order to relieve him in part of these burdens, and to afford him some marked evidence of our most sincere and affectionate regards for himself and family.”

Previous to this accident, and subsequently, after his health was restored, he frequently lectured before the Teachers' Institutes which were held in different parts of the State. The Hon. Joseph White, of Williamstown, Mass., formerly a parishioner of his in Lowell, at that time secretary of the Board of Education, had the charge of these Institutes, and availed himself of Dr. Foster's aid whenever it could be obtained. It was thus that Dr. Foster came to speak on such occasions at Holyoke, Chicopee, Westfield, Hadley, Ware, Lee, Conway, Becket, Hatfield, Dudley, and other places in Massachusetts. Some of the themes on which he spoke to the teachers of the State were “Self-Culture,” “John Milton,” “The Dull Scholar,” and “Reading.” The following letter refers to one of the lectures he gave most frequently.

“My lecture before the Teachers' Association at Chicopee consumed the whole of week before last. It was very kindly received. The officers of the Association have asked for its publication. I wrote it in a colloquial style, taking three abstract points for the hinges and skeleton of my discourse, then crowding in all the literary and biographical incidents I could gather from my memory, after a life of somewhat omnivorous reading,—all the incidents, I mean, which could illustrate my subject, viz. ‘The Connection between Dullness in Childhood and Genius in Manhood.’ My hinges were the following: 1, Illustrate truth; 2, Secure docility; 3, Study the child's natural bias of mind. Then with sufficient abstract

thought to expound and enforce the lessons, I referred to Walter Scott, Humphrey Davy, Isaac Barrow, Samuel J. Mills, Patrick Henry, Thomas Scott the commentator, Sargent S. Prentiss, Nathaniel Taylor, and some others. The Franklin County Association have sent me a request to deliver it before their body, the last of the month."

As his work went on, in the fall of 1863 and the spring of 1864, his church enjoyed a revival of religion. In June, 1863, he was intensely desirous of such a work of grace, and his words are almost a prophecy.

"JUNE 29, 1863.

"God be thanked for this sweet home, for this kind and intelligent people; God give me strength and grace to labor with some degree of success corresponding to my opportunity! I long for the salvation of these souls and for the enlargement of this church. The architect is known by his work; the proof of a right agricultural theory is a large harvest in the autumn; the proof of legal science is to win a case in court; the proof of medical skill is to cure the sick. Genius is vain; knowledge is vain; plausible, profound philosophical theories are vain, if they do not issue in important practical results. What is the proof of my ministry? Must it not be Christians built up in their most holy faith, souls plucked from the jaws of everlasting burnings? What fruit have I of my toils, what recompense for my anxious studies, if the impenitent are not brought to Christ? I confess that I have sometimes longed for riches, so many privileges and enjoyments, and so many opportunities of doing good can be purchased with money. I have sometimes longed for office, imagining that I could use the control which authority gives for the benefit of my fellow-men. But after all, it is my profound conviction, that there is no reward like that of a servant of God, who labors faithfully for souls. I think I can say, Farewell fortune, farewell fame, farewell power, if I may but have some ransomed ones in the day of judgment to present as my joy and crown."

The interest first manifested itself in a feeling frequently and tearfully expressed among the people, that such earnest preaching threw a weight of responsibility on the church, and that they would be accountable if souls were not saved. The meetings became very tender and earnest; the brethren of the

church went out two by two and called on every family within the parish limits; a day of fasting and prayer was observed; the services were obtained of Dr. Foster's brother, Rev. Wm. Cowper Foster, then employed to labor as evangelist in Hampden County, Mass., by the County Conference of Congregational Churches. Dr. Foster preached for seven weeks almost every evening in different districts of the town, and held frequent inquiry meetings. Before his brother's engagement, and after it was ended, he was assisted for some weeks by a brother of one of his parishioners, Rev. Moses Smith.

Most precious results followed these measures; the church was greatly quickened, and a large number of people, young and middle-aged, were hopefully converted. The following letters of different dates give detailed accounts of many of the facts recorded above.

"SUNDAY EVE, Feb. 8, 1864.

"*My Dear A*——, —The work of God is going on with enlarging power, manifestly and undeniably to all minds. The meeting this evening in the church was the largest I have known at any evening service. Mr. Smith has preached for us ten times, and rendered opportune and admirable help. My strength is inadequate to my duties, and I may sink in the midst of the course, but I have occasion to praise the Lord for his great goodness in granting me to see this widely-spreading salvation."

"WEDNESDAY, Feb. 11, 1864.

"*My Beloved Wife*, — It is ten o'clock, P. M. I have occupied two hours in the evening prayer-meeting. Five new inquirers were in, making more than thirty in all with whom I have conversed, twenty of them indulging hopes. Thirty old and uncertain hopes revived. Our meetings are becoming more and more solemn. The spirit of God is evidently in every house. Every member of the church was appointed last week on a committee of visitation. Reports have been made to-night from two thirds of them. Members have gone forth speaking and praying, who have not been heard to speak and pray for years. They have come in here to-night with hearts warmed, encouraged, strengthened; the Holy Spirit is evidently moving them to new hope and new fidelity. They say that they went forth with fear and trembling, and the utmost reluctance, but God has helped them, and now they

would be ready to go over the same duty again with joy and with holy confidence. I had three inquirers in on Monday, and was out yesterday in the Chicopee district, visiting. Have a preaching service to-morrow evening in the town hall, Friday evening in Tatham school-house."

"MARCH 9, 1864.

"*My Dearest Emily*,—By vote of the brethren, we devoted the whole of yesterday as a day of church fasting, humiliation, and prayer. Three meetings were held; at ten and a half A. M., two P. M., and seven in the evening. More people were out than have attended a church fast here for thirty years. The brethren spoke and prayed from ten and a half o'clock, A. M., till nearly sundown, with only an hour's intermission, without cessation. I did not occupy ten minutes all day long. It was a very solemn and impressive meeting. Our meetings have now continued seventy successive days. Mr. — has been home and came to see me. He said that after writing to me his mind was in deep anguish for days. The darkness continued until the day my letter reached him. He took it from the post-office in the beginning of the afternoon and carried it to his room. He read two pages, and the tears began to flow. He laid it down and could not refrain from a long and bitter season of weeping. He took the letter again, and read it through. He then kneeled down, and in earnest and humble prayer, as he hoped, consecrated himself to Christ. The following Sabbath was such a Sabbath of delight as he never had before. Since then his peace had been like a river. With tears and trembling words of gratitude he expressed his obligations. I think God will lead this young man on to an eminently beautiful and useful Christian life."

It is interesting to know what themes occupy a successful and earnest pastor in a time of revival. The following extract shows what were the topics which engaged Dr. Foster's attention at this time, and the treatment he gave them.

"Yesterday forenoon I preached on 'The Joy of Salvation.' I. Its nature as resulting from—1, The pardon of sin; 2, Communion with Christ; 3, Regeneration; 4, Progressive sanctification; 5, Hope of heaven. II. Its power as a motive to holy action. Afternoon sermon, 'Sources of Church Prosperity.' I. Presentation of God's truth. II. Presence of the Holy Spirit. III. Holy activity of church members. IV. Power of individual influence. Evening sermon, 'Methods of Sub-

duing Sin.' I. Form right estimates of the world. II. Meditate on death and eternity. III. Avoid temptation. IV. Go forward in personal duty. Last Friday evening sermon, 'Come thou with us, and we will do you good.' I. The Christian is on a pilgrimage. II. Worldly possessions are unsatisfactory. III. Two entirely contrary paths lead out of this land of exile. IV. The glory of God the Christian's ruling desire. V. The loss of souls a heavy burden upon his heart. VI. His tender regard for neighbors and friends, and his labors for their salvation. VII. His peculiar regard for the members of his family and kindred circle, and his labors for their salvation. VIII. The blessedness of the new convert. Last Thursday evening sermon, 'Come thou and all thy house into the ark.' I. The deluge a type of the judgment. II. The ark a type of Christ. III. Responsibility of pious parents for their children. IV. Duty of unconverted parents,—1, To their own souls; 2, To their families. One week ago Sunday, 'Grounds of Full Assurance of Hope.' I. Its evidences existing in the instructed intellect. II. Its evidences in the renewed affections. III. Its evidences in the life. IV. Its mighty power as a spring of action. One week ago Saturday, 'Christian Watchfulness' (Mark 13:35). I. Our tendencies to spiritual slumber—its cause,—1, False ideas of God; 2, False opinions of self; 3, Absorbing worldly cares. II. God's methods of waking the sleeper,—1, Common means of grace; 2, Sickness, calamity, death; 3, Special strivings of the Holy Spirit. III. The Master cometh at uncertain and unexpected times. IV. The nature of watchfulness,—1, Great thoughtfulness and constant expectation; 2, Resistance of sin and waiting for opportunities to glorify Christ. One week ago Thursday,—'The Effect of Religious Reasoning' (Isa. 1:18). I. To give correct views of truth and duty. II. To exalt the aims of the life. III. To banish doubt and indecision. Reflections,—1, How fearful is sin; 2, How precious is the Saviour; 3, How joyful is repentance. Two weeks ago Sunday, 'Characteristics of Love to Christ' (Eph. 3:17). I. It is a fervent, profound affection. II. It is a permanent affection. III. It is an intelligent, believing affection. IV. It is an elevating affection. V. It is a self-sacrificing affection. VI. It is calculated to give a mighty power over other minds."

The last of March he sums up the work as follows:—

"MARCH 28, 1864.

"A week ago last Saturday, after preaching four sermons at Holyoke the previous Saturday and Sunday, and after preach-

ing four sermons at home on the four preceding days, I struggled with most intense effort to prepare one sermon for the following day. In the afternoon, up to midnight, and on the next morning up to the church hour, I succeeded in driving the exhausted machinery into action, and preached from the text, 'Awake, thou that sleepest,' one of my most intensified sermons, but it was at a terrible cost. Since this revival began, I have made more than sixty addresses, thirty-five of them with all the study which I can now give to new sermons, thirty-five of them extemporaneous addresses, costing me only the premeditation of the hour, and yet causing me very great anxiety. The revival still progresses; two new inquirers came to converse with me last week. The meeting last evening has never been surpassed in solemnity since the beginning of the interest. We may reckon fifty, probably, impenitent sinners converted and timid hopes revealed and confirmed, as the subjects of God's grace in this time of His loving dispensation. Our parish numbers about nine hundred souls; this is one to eighteen. Springfield has four hundred converts in a population of thirty thousand—one to seventy-five. God has given us a great blessing, for which, if this were the only work of our life, we might well give Him devoutest and everlasting praise."

But the incessant strain he had been under in this work for three or four successive months, proved too much for his strength. His exhausted frame gave way, and for weeks he could not study. He writes of his condition thus:—

"APRIL 8, 1864.

"*My Dear A*——,—I have not written a sentence, good, bad, or indifferent, for three weeks. My letter to you was my last convulsive throe. I preached, for forty successive days, what was equivalent to one sermon a day, making five sixths of them new. Overworking the brain in this sort of style, the machine broke a rivet and stopped running. Whether I shall be able to wind up the watch again, remains to be seen. Excessive exertion has strained the spring near to snapping. This season of the year debilitates me; anxiety for my family overwhelms me. I preached two old manuscripts yesterday (Fast day); three old manuscripts last Sunday. I expect soon to be regarded as an old parchment myself, yellow, illegible, and disagreeable."

As the summer opened, one of his deacons, appreciating his exhausted state, with great kindness took him to Saratoga and entertained him there for some time. Thence Dr. Foster went to New Hampshire to visit among his relatives and friends. The following extracts are from letters written during this vacation.

“SARATOGA SPRINGS, June 8, 1864.

“I am passing my time quite in an indolent, pleasant, recreating dream. I walk with Deacon Southworth four times a day, an hour each time. I drink of the waters three times a day, four tumblers each dose. I wander along the valley of medicines and through the streets of refinement, and past the meadows of green, and over the hills of sand, and into the groves of pine. I saunter through the grounds of Union Hall, its lawn so closely shaven, its elms and oaks and ash trees and bass-wood and maples and evergreens, making so agreeable a shade. I take my dinner of boiled mutton, peas, quince pie, ice-cream, and nuts. I intoxicate my soul with the contemplation of soldierly devotion and heroism. I go off in the chariot of imagination to explore the perils and the sufferings which A. is passing through. I turn the wings of my airy convoy on the home-stretch towards West Springfield, pausing with the sick and the bereaved, and the anxious and the thoughtful, and the sympathetic and the friendly and the true-hearted. I make up my long arrears of correspondence. I retire at nine and a half o'clock. I buy the *Albany Evening Journal* and the *New York Herald*, and after reading them, spend just as much time as I can in cutting them into proper size and arranging them under suitable topics for preservation. I loiter in the bookstore and look at the banks of volumes and the faces in the frontispiece. I lie down and try to sleep and can't. I get up and jot down a topic or a thought for a future sermon. I go out and look over the fences of the many beautiful gardens of the town, to see if I can find any pear trees. I look in vain. Oh, the absence of taste! Thus I get through the weary day, *strenuouse nihil agendo*. And thus I get through this fruitless, zigzag letter. A loving adieu. I am too much spent to sign my name.”

“HANOVER, N. H., June 20, 1864.

“I shall return to West Springfield to labor for the perpetuity and increase of the revival there, with devout gratitude to God that I am permitted to be employed in so blessed a work. I have been reading lately a good deal about the dif-

ferent methods of conducting revivals of religion, and the results which followed from the toils of Nettleton and Griffin and Finney and Hammond. I think that Nettleton was one of the most beautiful, wise, and blessed Christian souls that ever lived. Griffin was not an evangelist, but a pastor of extraordinary spirituality, unction, and power, laboring constantly with direct practical effort, and with great success, for the conversion of sinners. Finney and Hammond have accomplished, in many instances, a large amount of good, but I am more doubtful of their doctrine and system of action. I have 'The Select Thoughts of Payson,' 'The Pastoral Sketches of Wisner and Spencer,' 'The Sermons of Finney,' 'The Volume of Revival Incidents' which Hammond has published. I hope soon to get time to read these volumes, not without profit, I trust, to my own soul and to the souls of my congregation."

With restored health Dr. Foster spent the year following, 1865, in the ordinary routine of duties. While on his summer vacation he wrote the following interesting letter from Dartmouth College regarding the commencement: —

"I have had a very interesting and pleasant commencement. Rev. Dr. Adams's address, Tuesday evening, which I heard, was poetic and clear, rich in thought, replete with vivacity, illustration, graphic language, graceful and forcible delivery. Hon. Mr. Bullock, Wednesday P. M., had a most valuable and fascinating oration. It was historical, philosophical, and profound, yet clear as the sunlight, and rhetorically beautiful as the autumn leaves. In his style of thought, expression, and delivery, he comes nearer to Rufus Choate than any other man I have heard. He has the same involved, complicated, accumulative, yet most impressive linking together of successive thoughts under one grammatical construction. He has the same enthusiasm of a rapt soul, the same nervous vitality of frame, which pervades with a constant glow, with an ever-warming and brightening heat, his whole action and thought. He is a beautiful and noble specimen of an orator, and will help to fill the great places left vacant by Webster and Everett and Story and Choate. His tribute to Dartmouth College as the educational agency which had given to the nation great and good men, his special tribute to Webster, to Choate, to Chief-justice Chase, to Professor Brown, the successful delineator of Choate's character, was the most impressive thing of the kind I ever listened to. My class did not hold a meeting. Only four, out of

thirty men now living, were there. General Marston and General Shepley were two of the four. General Shepley made a very eloquent speech on the proposition to erect a Memorial Hall, commemorative of alumni lost in the war. Professor Patterson, Dr. Adams, Chief-justice Chase, Richard Kimball, of New York City; the author, Stoddard; B. Colby, register of U. S. treasury, spoke very ably on the same question. Chief-justice Chase spoke twice, his longest speech — and a most lucid, convincing argument it was — on ‘The Expediency of Negro Suffrage.’ This was at commencement dinner. I had the very great, and very unexpected, and very accidental honor of sitting next to Chief-justice Chase at the dinner-table, and of enjoying his conversation for a whole three-quarters of an hour. He is a most child-like and accessible man in his manners, no hauteur, no affectation, no distance. He talked with me about Cornish, his native town; about Columbus, the capital of Ohio; about the young graduates, performers of the day; about the Monroe doctrine, one of the topics of discussion on the commencement stage, — just as quietly, unostentatiously, as a brother would with a brother. In the alumni meeting, as the list of deceased graduates of the college was read, I spoke of Charles’s* accomplishment in the war, occupying some ten minutes. His exalted motives from the beginning; his power in enlisting men into the army; his heroism at the battle of Shiloh; his patience and unfaltering endurance at Vicksburg; his eagle eye and rapid mind as a leader of skirmishers; his faith in God through all periods of military disaster; his devotion to friends, as well as to country, in the last fearful battle, which ended his life, — were the points of my statement. Davis spoke very touchingly and eloquently of Daniel’s* consecration of himself to a righteous cause. A eulogist will be appointed to draw the character and delineate the deeds of the soldiers of the college who have fallen in the war.”

In the fall of this year the First Church in West Springfield was invited by the First Church in Washington, D. C., to be represented on a council called to consider questions pertaining to the welfare of that church. Dr. Foster accordingly went to Washington, and thus wrote to his elder daughter concerning his trip: —

“My visit to Washington was very exhausting, and yet, on the whole, very awakening and satisfactory. Boston, Portland,

* Dr. Foster’s brothers, officers in the army, killed in the war.

Brooklyn, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, sent their representatives, men from nine churches. We had a debate of five hours' continuance: first, on the 'Independency of the Church'; second, on the 'Sufficiency of their Creed'; third, on their 'Financial Projects for Building a Church Edifice.' I spoke three times, once on each of the three questions before the body, on the first point differing somewhat from Dr. Thompson; on the second, in opposition to Henry Ward Beecher's delegate, a self-possessed, fluent, practical lawyer, who was very severe in his criticisms on the creed and by-laws of the church; on the third, I disagreed again, pretty widely, with Dr. Thompson and his delegate, a lawyer from New York City. Rev. Mr. Nichols, of Cincinnati, argued with the lawyers. Rev. Dr. Walker, of Portland, was on the line of argument which I advocated. Our discussions were earnest, but entirely amicable and kind. The final decision corresponded very nearly with the views I held throughout the debate. I enjoy such conflicts of thought and argument, keen but friendly, decisive, sometimes incisive, but all in love. It sharpens the intellect, as the whetstone the scythe. It affords comparison and exhibition of the quality and the calibre of different intellects, of the calmness and fairness of the disposition, of the soundness of judgment and the extent of knowledge. It gives fine opportunity for wit and humor, for the drawing of analogies, for argument and illustration, for the presentation of historical lore, for the exercise of logical and poetical faculty. I should love to be a member of Legislature or of Congress, and to mingle in the political and historical and legal controversies, though I am not sure that it would not awaken in me a more independent, combative, dogmatic spirit than I now possess. After all, the ministry is the purest, highest, noblest, most beautiful employment of earth."

A picture of Dr. Foster's life in West Springfield would be notably incomplete, which omitted a mention of his greatly-loved garden. He had a natural fondness for gardening, but never before, even in his first pastorates in the country, had he had a good opportunity of gratifying his taste. Here in West Springfield, in connection with the parsonage, was an excellent garden, large and very fertile. Dr. Foster worked this land constantly, and found in it great profit to his health. He was always successful in raising the finest vegetables and fruits, though if a profit and loss account had been kept, it probably

would have given his labor a poor showing as a business transaction. The paragraphs in his letters concerning his garden are always in his happiest vein. It was here that he became a zealous cultivator of pears. He knew the names of all the varieties of pears, both dwarf and standard, and could recognize the fruit at a glance. He never ceased, from this time on, to feel a keen interest in pear culture, and to the very last of his life he cared for his trees with loving assiduity. Of his pears and his garden, these are some of the things he said: —

“What shall I say of my reading? You will think me a degenerate scion of a manly stock. I have out from the library six books on pear culture, and I confess that, for the time being, biography, history, literary essays, even the reports of the war, hold a second place in my interest. I sigh for half an acre of ground on which to plant dwarf pears, and for the means of their cultivation. One man planted an acre of pear trees, and in the fifth year had one hundred and fifty bushels of pears, and sold them for eight hundred dollars. An acre of pear trees, in full bearing, is estimated to be worth five thousand dollars, as it will pay the interest on that sum, and expenses, for any number of years.

“If I had had half an acre of ground when I was settled at Henniker, and had planted it with pear trees, I should have obtained exercise, air, diversion of thought from the one monotonous and consuming strain on a minister’s mind, which would have added ten years to my life, and twenty years to the efficiency of it. I say these things as suggestive to you, my son, if you ever settle in a pleasant, rural parish, as I hope you may. It is not too late for you to learn some things necessary to a minister’s happiness and usefulness. Intense, unrelieved occupation in one solitary direction is a heavy clog upon all action. It is too late for me, not exactly to learn, but to avail myself practically of knowledge which would have been of unspeakable value to me early in my ministry. I never knew how to get amusement; I had no relish for rough sports; I was chained in society. I was intensely a lover of books, and abstract, introspective reflection. I drove in that rut until the wheels went in over the hub. I wish to save you from my irreparable suffering. Love books, be profoundly interested in your ministerial work, but do not neglect to give yourself, in some way, suitable relaxation.”

"LEAFY PARSONAGE, May 17, 1863.

"*My Beloved A*——, — Yesterday I purchased twenty dwarf pear trees (mainly Bartletts and Louis Bon de Jerseys), and set them out in my garden, digging twenty holes three feet square and two feet deep, carrying twenty pails of water to puddle the soil, carting on my wheelbarrow twenty loads of decomposed turf, trimming the tree roots and limbs, and filling in the dirt around them with care. I believe I have never been more tired in my life, unless I make exception of two or three most bone-aching occasions.

"I have been preparing for a hegira to Hanover, and a rustication there of three weeks. It has been a heavy and wearisome work for me to get my garden in preparation for so long an absence. I have gone at the weeds as McClellan and Banks, McPherson and Sherman, Rosecrans and Rousseau, Sedgwick and Sickles, go at the rebels. I have mowed them down by the squadron, I have extirpated them, I have confiscated their lands, I have subjugated them, *veni, vidi, vici*. I find that work wearies me. Bones ache; hands hang down; interior viscera give signs of pain; I come into the house at night feverish, and thirsty, and weak, and every organ and sense says 'Go to bed.' I believe I shall have to change my theory; I used to think three or four hours daily of manual toil would help the brain. Perhaps it does, if the constitution be vigorous and the endurance be large; but a feeble frame and a shattered constitution cannot bear a heavy strain in both directions. I am between Scylla and Charybdis, — if I do not work, I run upon the shallows, body and intellect become dormant; if I do work, I run upon the rocks, muscle and soul both sink with fatigue. What shall I do? Quit the ministry and be a farmer? If the alternative be this, to save the body alone, or else lose both mind and body, is it not duty to hold on to that one?"

"MAY 25, 1863.

"We are now in the very crown and glory of the year. The last half of May and the whole of June are to me the perfection of the season and the joy of life. Every breath is an elixir; every opening of the eyes is a sensation of beauty; every promise of nature and anticipation of the mind is an omen of blessings to come. I bless God for these months of the year. My garden has been pressing me, for the spring was backward. I have no horse nor plow, and all my work is done by the dead-lift. My peas, beans, corn, cucumbers, musk-melons, lettuce, beets, parsnips, endive, celery, are planted, — everything but the tomatoes. I have made and

sowed ten flower-beds, in addition to your mother's and Emily's; for, if it be possible, especially in the feebleness of Emily's health, I would like to mingle beauty with utility, and have something to gratify the cultivated mind, as well as the physical appetite. My apple trees and my strawberry beds are in full blossom, and bid fair to give me adequate harvest of fruit. I have now forty dwarf pear trees in my garden, and if half of them live, and bear fruit within two years, I shall be amply repaid. I have planted eighty hills of dahlias, and I expect that two thirds of them will be crowned with blossoms in the autumn, thanks to the beneficent Lord who giveth flowers. I have forty newly hatched chickens, most of them little whities, beautiful as snow-flakes of the winter. So you see that, what with animate and inanimate pets, with feeding and watering, with pruning and weeding, my thoughts find amusement, and my hands find employment, my soul receives exhilaration, and my blood gets vitalized. I thank God every day for West Springfield, for my generous people, and for my beautiful, leafy, flowery, fruitful garden."

During the West Springfield pastorate, Dr. Foster's eldest daughter was much of the time away from home, being at first at school in Lowell, and subsequently in the family of Dr. Geo. W. Garland, of Lawrence, under medical treatment. The letters subjoined are written in that peculiarly tender and graceful vein which always characterized his intercourse with his beloved daughter. The first letter refers to criticisms that his daughter had made on certain candidates whom a pastorless church was hearing.

"Please like the preaching as well as you can. If some messenger were to come with a communication from your brother to you, you would not stop to think of the cut of his coat, or the elegance of his manners, or the facility or beauty of his diction. 'Give us the message sent; tell us the welfare of the dear one!' This would be the first and only urgent demand. So of the ambassador from God, with the word of inspired and everlasting truth. Does he in very deed bring a message from your Elder Brother, your Redeemer, your all-merciful Friend? If so, welcome him gladly and hear him attentively, although he had a hundred defects for every one you now discover."

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 22, 1861.

"*My Beloved Emily*, — Your letter and a letter from A. both came to-day, and gave to my heart-pulses a new throb,

and to my depressed spirits an upward lift. I seem to be sitting in your pleasant upper chamber, looking upon two young ladies in their rocking-chairs, thankful for the joy they have in each other's society, assured that they will try to fit each other for usefulness and heaven, and confident that all the intellectual stores they are acquiring, and all the beautiful and lovely accomplishments with which God has endowed them, will be gladly and fully consecrated to their Divine Master's service. I have been reading for the last two or three days the book entitled 'Lady Huntington and Her Friends,' by Mrs. Helen C. Knight, of Portsmouth, N. H. Such a sisterhood of lovely women, of titled rank, of elegant manners, of perfect taste, of high mental culture, perfectly at home in the best educated society, perfectly competent in the most literary conversations, yet loving the Saviour with a devoted love, and finding their highest pleasure in religion, is rarely to be found. Lady Selina Huntington, Lady Margaret Hastings, Lady Gertrude Hotham, Lady Fanny Shirley, Lady Ann Erskine, Lady Jane Glenorchy, and others of exalted name and fame, were among the most attractive exhibitions of piety, and the most remarkable instruments of usefulness, of which I have ever read. England will bear them on her heart in gratitude before God, to the end of time. There are a few modern and American names worthy to be written in the same catalogue, — Harriet Newell, Mary Lyon, Mary Ware, Ann Hasseltine Judson, Sarah Lanman Smith, Mary Hawes Van Lennep, Henrietta Hamlin, Emily Chubbuck Judson, Isabella Graham. I love to repeat those names over and over; I love to draw in my mind's eye the picture of those angelic lives. I love to take the encouragement which such spirituality gives, to other waiting, panting, sorrowing souls, to press on towards eminent sanctification. Said Margaret Hastings, 'Since I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, I have been as happy as an angel.' Oh, my darling daughter, what a payment does heaven give for our imperfect services, what a return to our longing desires!"

On a rainy day, during one of his vacations, he wrote: —

"Shut out from the diversified and busy world, and shut in within the four walls of my lonely room, how can I quicken my pulses, how can I gain comfort and strength and cheer, so much as by converse with my beloved daughter? The tie between father and daughter is one of peculiar sacredness. Tender and true is the bond where sympathies are one, where studies are similar, where the aims of the life are the same,

Thank God, these cords of affection and thought unite us together, and shall draw us more closely till we die."

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Jan. 19, 1862.

"*My Darling Emily*,—Though we are separated by a hundred miles of space, may not our spirits meet and mingle in thoughts of God, and Christ, and heaven; in longings for holiness; in yearnings for the right and efficient fulfilment of duty? Have you had a pleasant and profitable Sabbath? I trust so. The mind makes its own place. It can make a heaven, where all around is dark; it can make a place of darkness and woe, where all external circumstances are auspicious. I trust, my beloved, that your religious despondency is disappearing, and that you can say, 'I know that my Redeemer is mine, and that I am his.' I deem it an attainable state of Christian experience, to have assurance of faith. Built on an intelligent interpretation and acceptance of the Scriptures, it is a sign that stormy passions have been subdued, that wild excitements obey the helm, that the love of the soul is anchored in heaven, and that winds and waves and storm-clouds and gulf-streams, however adverse their influence may seem to be, are really bearing the spirit on to its celestial and ever-blessed harbor. Your life has had its trials, for one so young, more numerous and more severe than most. And yet, I believe that ere long you will see the wonderful love of God in them all, and will understand how adversity as well as prosperity has been working out your highest and eternal happiness. You remember, in our ride from Hanover to Haverhill, N. H., summer before last, we passed one or two curvatures in the Connecticut River, with their majestic sweep. The course of the river is south; and yet in those places it seems to be moving northerly, easterly, westerly, and to have no fixed determination. Yet the waters are all bearing on steadily to the south; the 'great bend' only gives additional beauty and fertilizing power to the stream, and allows more happy homes to line its banks. Thus is it with your Christian and intellectual life: it has its flexures and pauses and hinderances and bends, but it is bearing on to the ocean of God's celestial and illimitable love, and it shall have more richness, volume, beauty, power, on account of its interruptions."

"WEST SPRINGFIELD, Oct. 4, 1865.

"*My Beloved Emily*,—I am lonely. Are you not glad? I wander about over my big and desolate house, seeking repose and cheerfulness, and finding none. I kindle a fire, first in the

sitting-room; second, in the northeast study; third, in the dining-room; fourth, in the north room below; fifth, in Emily's room,—but they are all haunted with memories and vacant of faces; they are all more smoky than they used to be, or else my eyes are dimmer. I go down to the farm, and get a basket of corn, and bring it home and husk it. I go out to the barn, and roll the carriage out, transpose a pile of corn, roll the carriage in, and put the corn back again. I find that agriculture has lost a moiety of its charms. The potatoes are not so red, nor round, nor mealy; the corn is not so ripe, nor golden, nor big in the ear, as a few weeks ago. Newspapers are more dull, books are more prosy, trees are more scraggly, flowers are more begrimed with dust, skies are more foggy than formerly. Can you tell me of any antidote for this universal deterioration? 'Home is home, be it ever so homely.' This is the old adage,—I dispute it. Home is not home because the house is whole, and warm, and comfortable; because the furniture is all there and uninjured; because the trees are not chopped down, and the grass is not dried up, and the fences and landmarks are not removed; because the cat and the chickens and the horse survive. Oh, no! Something else is needed to make home. I sit solitary and sad, and long for the eyes and voices and the forms and the movements to which I have been accustomed; for the thoughts of the mind, and the sympathies of the heart, and the constant fellowship and aid, which have constituted my happiness. Come back, O ye dear ones, to my home, and make it home! Come back and fill the cheerless, aching solitude of my heart. Do you have now and then a ride in the country? And does the scenery seem to you beautiful? A. is quite in raptures over Andover landscapes. I am glad he is moved by them. We are educated insensibly by scenery. Freedom, independence, decision, high thoughts, are inspired by mountains. The gentler affections of sympathy, forbearance, and loving care dwell in the quiet, beautiful nooks and leafy glens of the valleys. Quick sensibilities, rugged, conquering energies, simple and frugal virtues, great aims, are cultivated by the diversified and the lovely in nature. The city is necessary to put on the last touch of refinement and of art; but the sweet face of the world, the contrasts of mountain and valley, the limitless expanse of horizon, the fragrance of flowers and fruits and grasses, the exuberant variety and exhaustless beauty of God's workmanship, the breezes sweeping full and free, are necessary not only for health, but for grandeur of soul and character. My own childhood and youth were spent in the midst of mountains, — Moose Mountain

on the left, Lord's Hill on the right, each of them two miles away; Ascutney to the south, more grand and massive still, twenty miles distant; and the whole range of the Green Mountains of Vermont, an unexampled panorama, stretching out in full view from the top of every elevation. At Henniker we and our children had more of the valley prospect. It was a basin amid the hills, with a quiet river gliding between, not so distinguished for rugged strength and sublimity as Hanover scenery, not so remarkable for fertility and beauty as the Connecticut valley. At Pelham, where two of my children were born, and two of them died too young to trace the finger of God in field or tree, but where you and A., as I well remember, used to cry out with exclamations of delight, if, in our occasional rides, a symmetrical prospect opened,—at Pelham we had more calm and uniform charm of scenery, but less variety and grandeur, less to awaken wonder. At Lowell, where precious Bela saw the light and shut his eyes to it again for all of time, we had the contrasts of hill and glen, of river and plain, of woods and cultivated field. Lowell scenery does not inspire surprise and agitation and power, so much as it does a well-balanced and perfect taste. This may be said of West Springfield also. In both places the goodness of God shines conspicuous, while the terror of His sky-piercing acclivities, and of His chasms, ravines, and deep abysses, must be learned from other spots."

Dr. Foster was always bound up in his family. No man ever lived more for his household. As the years wore by, two events were coming to a culmination, both of intense interest to him. His only son, who had been followed with prayers and counsels and self-denying aid since the year 1859, when he went away from home to begin an eight years' course of study in fitting for the ministry, was now about finishing up that course and stepping forth into active life. Dr. Foster was singularly affected by this fact. He seemed to feel that he lived again in his son, and that his own work was nearly ended, now that his son was ready to enter the ministry. This idea is expressed in the playful and even pathetic fable with which the following letter closes. It may be said, in explanation of the fable, that it was suggested by the untimely end of a pet squirrel, named Skiouri, which his son had brought home from college.

“DECEMBER 5, 1864.

“*My Dear A——*, — We shall be most happy to see you as soon as you can possibly come, and to have you stay to the latest possible hour which health and pleasure demand, which study and duty permit. I shall be most happy to welcome you to my pulpit. The day when I first hear you preach will be an epoch of my life, long waited and prayed for, the result of many forecasting and anxious plans, of toilsome yet delightful labors, of marked yet cheerful privations. Some men of comprehensive calculation and great enterprise turn their faculties and strength into gold; and if, at the age of fifty, they can retire from onerous responsibilities upon a hundred thousand dollars, and spend the remainder of their days in leisure, and study, and travel, and friendship, and recreation, and religious improvement, their life is counted a success. I refer not to the sordid miser, but to the large-minded and large-hearted man of energy, who accumulates wealth and uses it aright. I have not lived for money. Some great men transmute their talents into posthumous fame; some into office; some into present popularity. I have not lived for any one of these objects. Some men, both great and good, adopt in their early life purposes of religious usefulness, and steadily and steadfastly they pursue that aim, — a determination to win souls to Christ, and to reform the evils of a wicked world. I started with that purpose, but I long ago surrendered the hope of ever seeing, in this world, any considerable fulfilment of that plan. My early aspirations of scholarship were large; they have been disappointed. My education in all departments has been a ‘torso.’ I was stopped from my purposes in college; I was set aside from the theological seminary; I was broken off from teaching; I have been brought repeatedly to a complete check in the ministry. My health is a thing of fragments, and, to use Choate’s comparison, I have been living for many years on the by-laws. For what, then, have I lived? I have lived for my children. They have been in my studies and my toils, in my affections and my anticipations, more than anything else in the world. If it had not been for my family, I should have been compelled to abandon my public efforts many years ago. My love for them and my hopes for them have inspired me and upheld me. Therefore I repeat, the hour that I first hear you preach will be an epoch in my life, and a thanksgiving in my heart. Come home and see us, and preach to us.

“I have lately been reading the history of Skiouri. He was a good squirrel and of a respectable family, but I have a word

or two to add to the autobiography. Skiouri lived on a high summit, where no clouds darkened his view, but bright sunshine lighted up his prospect; where grandest scenery was all around him, and invigorating breezes constantly blew; where nuts of richest meat and boundless abundance lay scattered at his feet; where he had nothing to do but to gather and store up in the nicest of all granaries all that he could eat, and all that his family and friends could eat for a life-time and an eternity; where a whole regiment of squirrels were constantly bringing him nuts of the fairest and most nutritious kind, and asking him to select for himself; where the very *élite* of all furred animals were constantly cooking him nuts in the most *recherché* style, and holding them out on a silver plate before him. Thrice fortunate and happy Skiouri! Mr. Skiouri, the elder, lived at the foot of the cliff in a deep, narrow, dismal gorge. Mists and darkness were around him; stifled and miasmatic airs oppressed him. His right front foot was half paralyzed at the lower joint, and his left front foot was broken at the upper joint; he had been in other respects an enfeebled squirrel all his life. He had made a rash engagement to gather nuts for five hundred squirrels who had other cares to attend to. So he went limping 'round, in that barren and uncomfortable region, to gather what he could and as good as he could. Sometimes he tossed a nut up to the summit for his son, as a sign of love, not because he supposed the younger squirrel needed those shrunken articles; he tossed them up with not a little effort and pain; it was easy for Skiouri the younger to toss down any quantity of nuts. For a time he did toss them down in larger numbers than he received from below, and for this the old cripple was truly grateful. At last the darkness began to gather into midnight blackness with Mr. Skiouri, the elder. Nuts were scarce; his labors were severe; his strength gave way; heart and hope failed him; the five hundred squirrels for whom he toiled began to think that the nuts he brought them were cracked, half the meat gone, and the rest of it mouldy. Young Skiouri, on the mountain, complained because the father did not toss up more and better nuts. Mrs. Skiouri and Bunny, the elder daughter, departed to a beautiful hill-side to dwell, and left Mr. Skiouri alone. After an absence of months, the whole family returned, but Mr. Skiouri they never saw more. They inquired of the five hundred squirrels: they knew nothing of his fate; they only knew that they had revoked the contract of nuts to be supplied on the one hand, and material comforts to be supplied on the other. The whole vicinage of squirrels went

about and made search. They traced him to a gloomy cave in the bosom of the steep declivity, from which no track went outward. The atmosphere of the cave was pestilential, its windings were labyrinthine, its depths were fathomless; the searchers only knew that the aged, and crippled, and despairing, and hapless Skionri had entered there and was lost. Adieu, beloved, and God's blessings ever abide with you. Your father."

The other event, which moved him far more powerfully, and undoubtedly broke up his pastorate in West Springfield, was the death of his beloved daughter Emily, in her twenty-third year. For a long time she had been in failing health. Everything that agonized parents could do, was done, but it was all in vain; the beautiful form grew pale, and wasted away, while the more beautiful soul ripened into unusual brilliancy of thought and spirituality of feeling. During her long condition of invalidism, Dr. Foster wrote thus to her physician, in whose family Emily had remained for months together for treatment.

"*My Dear Dr. Garland*,—I used to read, when young, of the devoted attachment which was likely to spring up between large-hearted physicians and the families of their patients. I think I can now understand experimentally, and '*ex imo cordi*,' what I used to think about, as a possible theory. Your generosity to my departed brother Edward, and your tender care of my child, and the gentle attentions and blessed social influences which your family have thrown around her, touch me most profoundly. May God reward you! May health and happiness and salvation be the abiding inmates of your home! Mrs. F. joins me in grateful and affectionate regards."

But no medical skill, and no self-denying, devoted parental care, could stay the progress of disease, and at last, Dec. 30, 1865, the cherished daughter passed away. The following touching letter will show how completely crushed was the heart-broken father:—

"Sometimes I think I am not reconciled to the loss of my fondly-loved Emily. The sense of utter vacancy and loneliness increases upon me. God has given me six children, full

of promise and loveliness; and at the age of fifty-two, with infirmities gathering upon me, a dense and impervious cloud, I wander about in my empty house, and find only one of the six — a little girl, whose education and character are yet to be gained — remaining to cheer me in my depression and aid me in my toils. You, my tenderly beloved son, my companion, my friend, even more than my child, are left to me; but our professional labors will henceforth place us apart, and our communion must mainly be by the imperfect method of correspondence. We are alone. The sense of weakness and inadequacy, the heavy weight of apprehension, the feeling that we have none to lean upon in our isolation, and that we shall soon totter and fall, oppress me with an awful distress. Last autumn we were alone just as we are now, but I was sustained by the daily hope that Emily would soon be with us again. Now that hope is departed. Like the Hebrews described in Deuteronomy, when their sons and their daughters were carried into captivity, 'Mine eyes look, and fail with their longing for her all the day long; there is no might in my hand.' And yet, why speak I thus? She has not gone into captivity, but into enfranchisement; she is not groaning under the cruel lash of exacting task-masters, but is rejoicing in the light and love of her Saviour's countenance; she is not an exile nor a wanderer, but has at last reached her home. She has put off the infirmities of the flesh; she has broken away from the chains of darkness, sickness, and imperfection; she has put on the robes of her Saviour's righteousness; she has taken the wings of the morning, and dwells in the region of light and health and purity and rapture. The presence of this dear child was an exhilaration to me all the time, more than meat or wine, more than garden or flowers, more than the scenery of mountain or glen or lake, more than books or general society. She suited me; her vivacity kept my mind alert; her originality of thought stimulated my curiosity; her rapid and accurate intuitions often threw unexpected light upon my perplexities; her joyous, hopeful temperament, which was her prevailing state of mind, tended to banish my despondencies; her occasional anxieties, which were profound, showed how susceptible she was to all influences, whether of grief or gladness, whether of fear or hope, whether of darkness or light, and touched me in a thousand points with sympathy and quickening and solace. Her perfect refinement of thought and taste lifted my own thoughts up into a region of purity and delicacy. Her countenance and form and attitudes and language and topics of conversation, all gratified my sense of beauty, all

gave a new spring for my longings for spirituality and the higher perfection. Her gratitude to God for mercies; her tendency, in all our walks and rides and talks, to see the hand of God in objects surrounding and in events transpiring; her invariable convictions of personal unworthiness, and her tenacious though trembling clinging to the cross of Jesus,—all inspired and strengthened my faith. She counselled me in difficulty, she soothed me in sorrow, she guided me in darkness, she aided me in toils, she etherealized my meditations, she purged away my dross, she exalted my aims. Darling, precious, sainted Emily! How can I live without her? May I not take comfort in the assurance that I shall see her again, where partings no more shall come? I shall look upon her countenance, radiant with intelligence, purity, love, and joy. I shall behold her form, and all that constitutes her personality, forever beautiful, youthful, healthful, enduring, efficient. She shall lean upon my arm, and walk by my side, not with the feeble step of the invalid, but with the elastic spring of the angel. She shall sit by my side, bound to me by ties of heavenly affinity, and loving to be near me. She shall rehearse to me her remembrances of earth and her experiences of heaven, and, as the elder-born spirit of light, shall lead me up to seraphic heights of knowledge and divine communion. She shall tell me all that she has learned of the mysteries and glories of the divine government, of the marvels of Jesus' grace, and the attractions of the heavenly service. She shall be my teacher, far more than I have ever been hers. All this as my joy and my reward will Christ vouchsafe to me hereafter, if I lean upon his cross and wait, with holy obedience and holy trust, for his appearing. Pray for me, that I may be enabled so to do."

After this the charm was gone from West Springfield. No longer could either the father or the mother endure the associations of the parsonage where their dear daughter had sickened and died; its loneliness was insupportable. Dr. Foster's health was much impaired by his grief. He became almost heart-broken; his work in West Springfield seemed to him, in this clouded state of his mind, unsuccessful, and he believed himself unfitted for the place. At this juncture there came to him an invitation to return to his old charge in Lowell. Feeling that a change of scene would be beneficial, recognizing the large usefulness possible to him as pastor of the John-street

Church, and attracted by the dear and cherished memories which thronged upon him, he accepted the call. Accordingly, although parting with deep regret from a people whom he loved and who loved him, he resigned his position in West Springfield, and was dismissed April 17, 1866. His feelings at the time are indicated in a letter written some months after to a friend in West Springfield.

"We have left behind, in West Springfield, friends as dear to us as any whom God has ever given us,—of Christian devotion, of intellectual culture, of sympathetic, genial, generous spirits. The town is full of mementos of our dear, departed daughter, full of suggestions of delightful ministerial labor, of precious personal friendships. I shall never find another locality which binds me by the charms of the scenery, by the comforts of the home, by the tender sympathies of Christian association, any more closely. I shall invoke blessings as long as I live, with all the warmth of earnest prayer, upon the venerable head of your father, upon the souls and the families of your brothers, from all of whom I received such constant, appropriate, whole-souled co-operation in my ministerial work. Their opportune and fervent supplications; their instructive, impressive remarks in religious meetings; their kind and sustaining encouragement, rendered to me personally; their uniform spirit of consecration to Christ; their bright and consistent example; their readiness for every good word and work,—will never be forgotten by me. I do not single them out as exhibiting any peculiar fidelity. I speak of them especially because writing to the daughter and sister. I have the same admiring and grateful recollections for all the people. I was depressed by a lack of results in gathering souls into the church. I became satisfied that another minister could do more good in that field than I could. It was no consideration of personal comfort, or ease, or happiness, that led me to desire a change. One sole, intense, undying longing for the conversion of souls led me to the step I took."

One of his parishioners, J. Newton Bagg, Esq., has thus reviewed his work during this pastorate:—

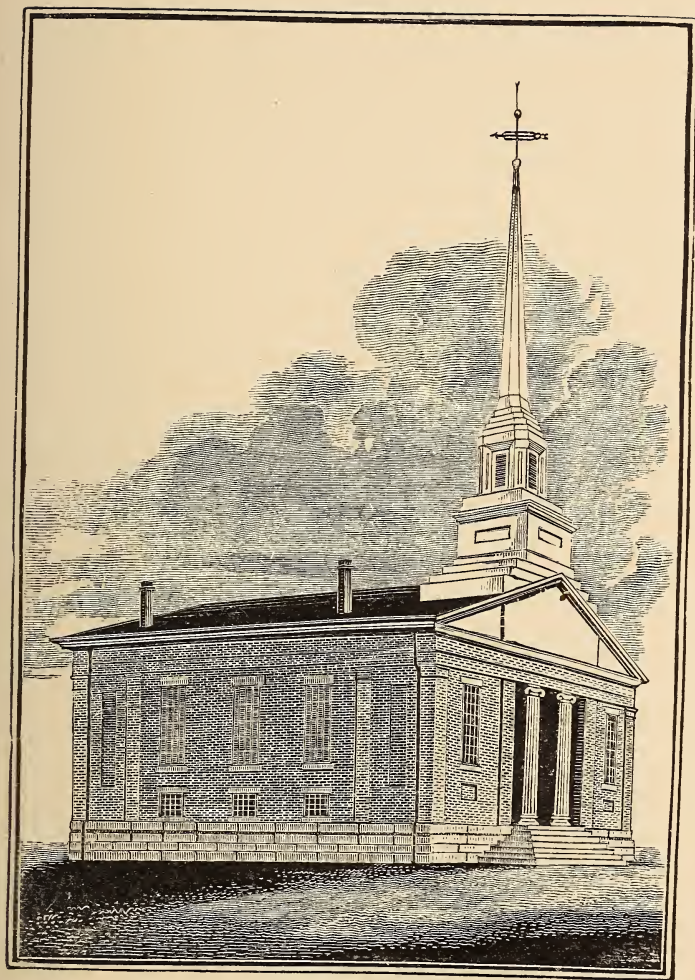
"His presence was an inspiration. Reverence, dignity, simplicity, tenderness, deep thoughtfulness, humility, were the characteristics which most impressed me. He was here five years, and filled the pulpit with great acceptance. I remem-

ber his great loyalty. He made several addresses on the war, that thrilled the young men and caused many to enlist in the Tenth, Twenty-sixth, and other regiments. He preached sermons on the war, and he had at his tongue's end the position of the various forces in the field. He studied the papers, and with maps and pins, in his study, he located many of the regiments. It used to be said that Dr. Foster knew every movement of the army, and anticipated every march. He had confidence in the generals, and no one rejoiced more heartily than he over the successes of Grant. He preached a series of sermons to young men, and another to young women, that were full of strength and beauty, and were very popular. A favorite gesture was the shaking of a finger, and when it began we were seldom disappointed with his eloquence. He was rapid in thought and speech, and the more rapid, the higher the excitement of his auditors. I have clutched the seat involuntarily when he seemed to be running away with us; but always found his speed invigorating. He complained, sometimes, that he could not sleep, and used to dig in his garden, and saw wood with all his might, for physical exercise. At the time he dislocated his shoulder, falling over a saw-horse, he said to one of his deacons, 'I think that this is providential, and that I am to be laid aside.' The deacon saw his opportunity, and replied: 'It seems to me that this Providence points to a new saw-horse, and I shall order one.' The spell was broken, and there was hearty laughter on both sides."

VIII.—Second Pastorate in Lowell, Mass.

1866—1878.

It is a very unusual thing for a pastor to return to a former charge. Whenever it is done, it speaks well for both pastor and people. It gives the best of evidence that the past life of each was creditable. We may justly draw such a conclusion from Dr. Foster's return to Lowell. He and the people of John-street Church knew each other well, and were glad to be reunited; and the resumption of the pastorate proved to be a source of happiness and privilege to both. Installed May 16, 1866, Dr. Foster at once fell into the old paths, almost as if there had not been an interregnum of four years and five months.



JOHN-STREET CHURCH AS IT WAS IN 1840.

The first two years of this pastorate were marked by another unusual experience. His son, in 1866, was settled over the Appleton-street (now Eliot) Congregational Church in Lowell, and side by side father and son carried on their work and took sweet counsel together. These were most happy years to Dr. Foster. Saddened indeed by previous trials, he yet, in the circumstances which now surrounded him, — the society of former friends, the stimulus of the city, the wide opportunities of usefulness, the companionship of a son whom he loved to treat rather as a brother, — maintained himself in an unusually cheerful frame of mind. But, in 1868, two events occurred which seriously affected for a time the equanimity of his mind, — his father died, and his son, in broken health, gave up his pastorate in the city.

No one who has not lost a father, on whom he has long leaned for strength, and to whom he has constantly gone for sympathy and counsel, can understand the shock which one feels when he realizes that he now stands at the head of the column in the march of life, and must take the whole responsibility in the advance. He had been accustomed to refer many difficult questions to a father's judgment, or, at least, had felt that there was one before him in the line of generations to whom he could go for sympathy. To be sure, Dr. Foster was now fifty-five years of age, and abundantly able to decide all questions for himself; but his father had been a man of intelligence and independent mind, and had sympathized in his son's work and lines of thought. Dr. Foster had ever been a most faithful son, always glad to give his father a home in his house, writing to him with loving frequency, and treating him with most filial deference. When death came to the aged man, though not unanticipated and confessedly desirable for one who left an earth of pain for a heaven of triumph, it yet was a shock and to some degree a discouragement to the sensitive mind of Dr. Foster. To this sorrow was added a peculiar disappointment and anxiety, when his own son, with health gone, was compelled to resign his charge in Lowell, and for two years remained unable to

do pastoral work. Certain letters of this period, of a miscellaneous character, may be here inserted.

The first is an invitation to an old college classmate and dear friend to visit him at his house. It happily illustrates his familiarity and interest in every living topic of the day.

"LOWELL, May 4, 1868.

"*My Dear Friend*,—It will give me very great pleasure to see you on your journey to Boston. Please come and spend just as long a vacation of rest with us as you can afford,—talking over old memories; roaming about the city and suburbs; reviewing, in the abandon of the careless hour, books and things and histories and men. Andrew Johnson and his vagaries, impeachment and its salient points, Congress and its difficulties, General Grant and his prospects, Bancroft and his mixture of past annals and present politics, Motley and his overthrow by McCracken, the English Parliament and the Irish problem, Italy and the coming Pope, the methods of education in the land, the systems of philosophy in vogue, the reform of drunkenness and other vices, are topics now filling the air both with idle prattle and with solemn words, about which I should like to ask your opinion. I cannot canvass any one of these themes on paper. The field of discussion is too broad, my time is too much crowded with official work, and my pen has too limping a gait."

The second was written in his summer vacation.

"YORK, ME., Aug. 26, 1868.

"*Dear Brother D*—, —My sport in this ancient city of York has been moderate. Old ocean is as big as ever he was, and thunders away on the shore his eternal anthem of praise to God, striking the deep chords of sub-bass in the storm, and singing the gentle lullabies of music in the calm sunshine. I never tire of the sublimity of his awakening roar, or of the beauty of his milder whispers. I stand on the rock-bound coast, and fish; I walk by the surf-washed shore, and muse; I sit on some conspicuous headland, and gaze abroad; I look out on the white-winged ships, floating by under an unseen propulsion; I mark the egg-shell boats, tossing on the breast of huge waves; I try in vain, either with naked eye or magnifying glass, to penetrate the haze of the distant horizon; I seek to comprehend the power that keeps this immeasurable sea in motion; I meditate upon all this mystery and marvel, and the sea

shouts — ‘God.’ I ponder upon the changes and uncertainties and dangers of the sea; I look out upon the spot, less than half a mile from the point of land where I so often fish, where, two weeks ago, Capt. John Fisher, of Newburyport, out in his two-masted little schooner, fishing alone, was struck by a sudden flaw of wind, and went down, to rise no more; and again the sea thunders — ‘Duty.’ The amusements of the sea exhilarate my mind. I hardly know what the abiding effect will be on my health. Yesterday, A. and I took our little sail-boat (the same that you saw last year), and went out alone two miles from shore. It was a warm, calm, beautiful day, the ocean smooth as glass. We fished four hours, and came in wafted by the sail. We caught eight codfish and twenty cunners, the codfish weighing thirty pounds, and the cunners ten pounds. We had a good time. I have been out on Goose Pond a half-dozen times, starting before light in the morning, and returning after dark at night, and the result of the six expeditions would not equal so many pounds of fish, nor so many quintals of genuine fun, as we secured yesterday after four hours’ work, or rather play. I get very tired, and fish a good deal in the darkness of night and on dry land, as well as in the sunlight and on the ocean. I am out of the whirl of politics and news, and of trade, and of intrigue, and of metropolitan confusion. I almost forget whether it was Grant or Chase, or Seymour or Vallandigham, that was nominated for the Presidency.”

The third is to his son while seeking health in the West.

“DECEMBER 12, 1868.

“*My Beloved A*——, — I turn aside from my sermon, which I have been pushing all the week, on the ‘Duty of Parents to the Sabbath-school’ (from Ex. 10 : 9), written by request, to hold a little conversation with you. It seems a long time since we have seen you, and we wish to get frequent pictures of your mind and heart and life. It seems very sad to us, that the opportunity of daily communion with our dear first-born child should now be ended, probably never again to be resumed. For twenty-seven years have we enjoyed it, with short collegiate intervals. Very precious has it been to us, comforting to our bereaved hearts, strengthening to our feeble hands, reviving to our hopes, helpful to our plans. We must submit; we must see the hand of God; we must ponder upon the compensations. The old eagles push out the young ones from the nest, to teach them to fly. We have not pushed you

out. You have taken a western flight, perhaps a distant one. Well, God be with you, my children. It is the appointment of Providence, doubtless for your best welfare and highest usefulness; nevertheless, our hearts are very sad at the parting. We can only comfort our disconsolate minds with anticipations of future happy results. You are in the hands of a better Guardian than we. I recur to the eagle's nest. 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord will lead you.' We have sought to be protecting and guiding eagles, so far as we could. Our love has been true, our anxieties have been constant. It is well that you have a better Helper.

"I have not been reading much for months, and do not know when I shall have time again to dive into the library alcoves. I thirst, with an inextinguishable desire, for a succession of books on religious philosophy. Porter, Mahan, Fisher, Hurst, Hagenbach, even Mill, Lecky, and Spencer, on Positivism and Rationalism, I wish to read; but I doubt whether I shall ever get the time."

The fourth letter shows the intimate connection, which was ever Dr. Foster's characteristic, between his mental and physical condition. The life-long struggle between a resolution to work and impaired health was becoming more and more intense. This letter bears marks of the terrible conflict.

"It is the anniversary of Emily's death. May God heal my wounds; they bleed afresh. May God guide my steps, lest I faint and fall. Since my father died, my nervous system has been wholly prostrate, and time does not seem to mend the disorder. Pains in my wrist, twinges in my back, spasms in my ankles, soreness in my teeth and jaws that makes it almost impossible to eat solid food, tossings of restlessness, and horrors of dreams in my night hours, afflict me continually. In the day-time I can get no relief on the pavements. My only recipe from harrowing thoughts and foreboding fears is to plunge into sermon-writing, and follow it from morn to midnight, with all the intensity of which I am capable. I get my mind engrossed, my heart interested, my soul relieved for a little time, of its insufferable burdens, thus and thus only.

"I went last night with your mother to a wedding-party at ——. A great and richly-furnished house; a complete jam of people; silk dresses, with a mile of train, and a camel's hump

of panniers, and an amazing quantity of bare shoulders, \$6,000 worth of presents to the wedded pair, many grandees present, Hon. — one of the guests (with whom I had an interesting conversation), a dance far into the night, our exit at ten o'clock, with memories of costly dresses and jewels and furbelows and bright eyes and imposing forms crowding upon our bewildered thoughts all night, constitute the confused recollections. Pardon, therefore, my abrupt close, and accept for yourself and H. my love and prayers, constant, fervent, undying."

In 1869, Dr. Foster bought a house, pleasantly located in the suburbs of Lowell. The purchase of a house is usually considered a doubtful experiment for a minister, but in this case it was no mistake. It secured a delightful home, free from all the annoyances of a rented house. It gave a stimulus and direction to efforts to save something for a time of greater need. It proved, in course of years, to be the chief reliance for support in a time of age and infirmity. With reference to this purchase, Dr. Foster writes in this happy vein: —

"JUNE 14, 1869.

"We have bought a house and garden. Your mother wishes to have an eye on the growing sprouts and the finishing rooms, as the garden is now in process of vegetation, and the house is now in the process of building. The place is in Centralville. The garden has 11,000 feet of land. The house has six chambers on the second floor, no one of them cramped, and below four rooms, the parlor extending across the whole end of the house. Entrance at the side of the house from a piazza. The plan of the house was devised by your mother. Why was her talent thrown away upon this poor dust, lean in purse, barren in invention, feeble in enterprise, who can give her a chance to build only one house? Price of the house and land, \$——; means of payment, in the outer limbo of dreams; time of occupancy, first of September; chief crop, growing this summer, cucumbers, out of which sunshine is to be made largely; number of pear trees, four; apple trees, six; cherry trees, two; grape-vines, ten; flower bushes, one; pear trees in prospect, nine hundred and ninety-nine; view from the chamber windows, Monadnock, lighted mills of Lowell, large and verdant sections of Dracut. We have a chamber on the wall, with an east window and a south, morning sunlight and noon-

day warmth, with blessed visions such as Christian saw from the Beautiful Palace, designed and joyfully set apart for a young prophet and prophetess named A. and H. Come, my beloved, over the hills and over the valleys, like the bounding roe, and occupy your rest.

"I have but little time to write, or I would tell of the beauty and comfort, of the pure air and delightful scenery, of the stillness and retirement, of the prospective joy of our new home. I think I shall build an altar and an idol, and bow down in reverence before — for raising the rent on us and driving us out of his house."

This year was marked by much hard work. A series of sermons on "The Christian Home" was prepared and preached. Some of the topics under this series were, "Give attendance to reading," "Rules of business success," "Divine appointment of the family," "Rules for happy marriages." The following letter gives an idea of the way he devoted himself to study in preparation for his pulpit work.

"I have had hardly an hour of leisure for reading for more than a month. My last serious attempt was to grapple with some of the Emersonian, materialistic sophistries. I piled around me all my metaphysical books, — Hamilton, Morell, Princeton Essays, Rogers, Buchanan, Hopkins, Shedd's Christian Doctrines, Bushnell, and for six days I read and took notes, and laid out heads of discourse, and pondered on difficulties, till my brain snapped again. My feeble health and my increasing pressure of pastoral duties stopped me in mid-career, and I have not been able to write out my thoughts. I have been very anxious to discuss with you this topic, — 'Our Intellectual Dependence upon other Men's Writings,' in view of what you wrote about Mr. —. But I have no time now. Yesterday, in the morning, I preached on the 'Importance of Making a Profession of Religion'; in the afternoon, on the 'Great Salvation.' I. What does it imply? — 1, Freedom from the love of sin; 2, Freedom from the curse of sin. II. Its source and means, — 1, God's eternal love; 2, Death of Christ; 3, Power of Holy Ghost; 4, Wonderfulness of divine authority; 5, Influence of affliction; 6, Influence of ordinances. III. Its practical results, — 1, Humility; 2, Self-renunciation; 3, Holy confidence."

The subjoined letter opens with a paragraph which shows how the work sometimes accumulated almost beyond the possibility of performance. The paragraphs which follow have an interest of their own.

“LOWELL, Nov. 5, 1869.

“*My Beloved A*——, —My head has been pushed till it is near the point of spontaneous combustion, like the wheel of a locomotive under a drive. A sermon before the Andover Conference three weeks ago; a sermon in Huntington Hall two weeks ago, to inaugurate a series before the Y. M. C. Association; a sermon to the young men of my own congregation last Sunday; three new sermons for preparatory lecture, and for the Sabbath, this week, —these have kept me on the most eager stretch. The Young Men's Convention was a marked success; one of the most blessed meetings I ever attended. I believe that laymen make a more solemn, awakening, and profitable meeting of this kind, than ministers. They are practical, direct, experimental, searching in address to conscience, pathetic in appeals to feeling, full of fact and illustration, aiming at results in conversion and the accomplishment of work. Ministers are too scholastic and metaphysical for these short and inspiring addresses, and these home-thrusts which lead at once to action. I heard some thirty laymen speak, nearly all of them to the point, earnest, vivid, fluent, crowded with thought, and with evident desire for the salvation of souls. I heard some six or eight ministers, all of them able. But three other men, General Howard, Senator Wilson, and Burnell of Wisconsin, gave the chief attraction to the meeting. Burnell is wonderful for heavenly-mindedness, pathos, and natural, easy, colloquial speech. Wilson is full of calm common-sense, and of thoughtful, refined, experimental power. General Howard is more intense than either, more broad and scholarly in his arguments, equally practical, direct, arousing, convincing. I like him amazingly. The meeting was a grand convocation of holy, working men.

“Our honored State of Massachusetts has once more turned a somerset and come up free run. Argument is useless, moral suasion is powerless, love and importunity and tears are vain, until the awful experiment of inebriety and ruin has been fully tried. It seems that every generation must try it for itself. Forty years ago, Dr. Beecher, Dr. Hewitt, Dr. Edwards, and many high-minded laymen, brought in a temperance reformation. The children and youth, the young men and young

women of our day, know nothing of the horrors of rum-drinking. They must learn the lesson for themselves. They are beginning to learn it. . . . Oh, that there might be some law to hold back the tempters and destroyers of youth, who are remorseless in their avarice, cruel as the grave, terrible as hell!"

In the year 1869, Rev. Mr. Earle, the evangelist, preached in the city. Much religious interest followed. Dr. Foster wrote of the work thus:—

"Three persons are propounded to join John-street Church by profession next communion. Our evening meetings are much increased, and our Sabbath services are very solemn; large numbers of individuals, I believe, are greatly thoughtful as to salvation, if not profoundly convicted. I know not what hinders them from immediate decision. If I am the Jonah that keeps the ship from coming to shore, would that I had never undertaken to sail in the ministerial boat, or otherwise, that some whale would now carry me to some far-distant and secluded island of the sea. I am troubled by some of the results of Mr. Earle's preaching here, but still hope for the best. Our honored Baptist ministers are preaching the necessity and indispensableness of a *form*. Some new converts, awakened out of an old profession, immersed when first they joined an Evangelical church, were re-plunged last Sabbath. Some of my own young professors of religion are thrown into doubts on the question of baptism. Mr. B. came to me last week to inquire after treatises on baptism for the satisfaction of some perplexed members of Appleton-street Church. I have not preached a word on baptism for twenty years. I do not know but I ought to be immersed—in the controversy.

"We have some thirty individuals in our congregation who are indulging a hope in Christ, and who ought to make a profession of religion. The result of Mr. Earle's evangelistic labors in this city, is the accession of some forty to each of the Baptist churches, a good deal of sectarian preaching, as I hear, from Baptist pulpits on the specialty of immersion, some vehement controversial sermons by Universalist ministers against the doctrine of the 'unpardonable sin,' etc., a general stampede from our churches to Baptist congregations on communion Sabbaths to see—what is to be seen; some dissatisfaction on the part of very thoughtful minds, and, I trust, some awakening on the part of careless minds. When the day of inquisi-

tion shall come, and the tares and the wheat shall no longer grow together, and all consequences shall be known, I am doubtful whether, in the system of Evangelism, the evil or the good will be found to predominate. My mind is left in a state of painful uncertainty and anxiety."

Dr. Foster was a passionate lover of nature. The mountains, the sea, the woods, and the flowers, the rushing stream, the placid lake, all interested him exceedingly. Like most ministers, he was also an enthusiastic fisherman. The following letters, written in the summer of 1869, from York, Me., where he spent his vacation with his children, illustrate these peculiarities.

"YORK, ME., Aug. 24, 1869.

"*My Beloved N*—, — I have been wandering on the smooth beach, by the side of the unfathomable, incomprehensible sea. Of this sight I never grow weary. These sounds are never dull nor unmusical in my ear. I spent two hours on the beach last Sabbath morning, from eight o'clock till ten. My soul was filled with a sense of the omnipresence, the omnipotence, the infinite love of God. The vastness and the majesty of the ocean well-nigh overpower me. The mystery and the wonders of the ocean subdue me with awe. I stood last Sabbath in the portico of that mighty temple; I gazed, far out as my eye would reach, upon the narrow edge of the boundless expanse, the waves rippling in the tireless play of the deep and shimmering in the morning sunlight; I saw the mystic lift of the adorable Hand; I heard the divine touch of the foamy fingers on that organ of ten thousand stops. It is music such as exalts the soul and refines it and entrances it beyond any earthborn melody. Some go to the beach to play croquet; some to dive into the plunging surge; some to shoot sand-peeps; some to drive fast horses on nature's macadamized road. But to me the beach is ever a preacher of God, and the sermon is of His power and of His wisdom and of His sleepless guardianship and inexhaustible grace.

"The day after I received Mr. Brooks's bait, I made my greatest haul, eighty-five fish. Thanks to his somewhat singular generosity, for I doubt whether a box of worms was ever forwarded by express before. Yesterday I went out upon the ocean with Captain Young, and caught twenty-eight fish: four hake, big fellows; one sea-flounder, equal to halibut for rich-

ness; ten cod, thirteen haddock. It was a day of great sport, and I feel pretty thoroughly tired. A. and H. are out to-day in their sail-boat, skirting up and down the river, pausing by this meadow to catch a butterfly; by the side of this sea-grass, to catch a fish; off in the grove, to catch a flower; moving in the quiet stream, to catch a sail; resting in the eddy, to catch a secret conversation and a few smiles of love. Mr. Clark sits in the parlor, reading a book; I sit in my unostentatious attic, writing to my darling daughter, treasure of my heart, sunshine of my home, hope of my declining age.

"You say that in our new house my study is 'splendid,' your room is 'pretty,' our room is 'indifferent.' That is the order in which I would have the delights come. Splendor—if we have splendor at all—for company; beauty ever hovering near and everywhere diffused around our beloved daughter; comfort without show in the parents' chamber. I am very anxious that your chamber should be attractive. You will spend time in it for study, time in it for prayer, time in it for rest and solitary musing. I hope it will be to you, not simply convenient and healthful, but a place of elevating thought, a place of joy, where the soul will find fitting emblem of the heavenly mansions and the heavenly fellowship."

"My Dear Wife,—I have been pursuing the frivolous pleasures of the place and of the hour pretty severely. I have found what the drunkard so eagerly desired, when he wished that his throat was greatly elongated. I have found pleasure that can be measured by the foot. Every codfish that I catch gives me a thrill, mingled with expectation, uncertainty, victory, doubt, delight, sixty feet long. I have caught to-day twenty-three cod and haddock, making thirteen hundred and eighty feet of joy. I hooked six others, three of them floundering big ones, and lost them, making three hundred and sixty feet of keen disappointment—almost as bad as it would be to drink some of the adulterated liquors. On the whole, I mark the day with a white stone. I went out with Captain Young, and had the biggest gift of fishing that I ever had in my life. I took breakfast before the rest of the family, and dinner on the ocean, so you will understand that I have had a double share of happiness for one day. If I had had an ocean made at my door, and been permitted to fish all my life, I think I should have been almost as happy as Mr. Murray in the Adirondacks. I do not expect to shoot a loon; I do not expect to hang on to the tail of a wounded deer; I do not expect to

shut my eyes and go down some unknown cataract; I do not expect to discover any phantoms dancing in the moonlight or the sunlight; I do not expect to ride with a mad horse in a bolted car; but, bating these small items, I think I am as well off for fun as the veracious and reverend Mr. Murray.

"Mr. Brooks arrived safe and sound at one o'clock, just as we were sitting down to dinner. I am exceedingly glad to see him. I find company in the ocean waves, company in the singing breezes, company in the music of memories, company in the softly-going footsteps of hope, company in fishes when they do not hide themselves too persistently under the sea; still I am obliged to confess it is rather lonesome. I doubt whether Mr. Brooks will enjoy fishing as I do. If he does, there is plenty of fun in store for him. The tumble of the waves, the ragged rocks, the beautiful grove, the desolate island, the quiet harbor, the rocking boats, the flitting ships, the shy fish, the still old town, the sluggish river rising and falling with the tide, are still all here.

"I witnessed, yesterday afternoon, at five o'clock, a combination of natural scenery, novel, wonderful, and instructive. The great eclipse of the sun was on, which I suppose you saw; but you could not see it under all the advantages of the sea-bound coast. Most of the day had been thick with clouds and wet with showers, until the eclipse began to appear, when the clouds all broke from the west and rolled back in a dense column upon the north. On the one side was the fathomless and illimitable ocean, ever restless in its action, never ceasing the musical notes of its wide diapason, sign of the omnipresence and the almightiness of God and of the mystery of his dealings. Eight miles to the north was Mount Agamenticus, rearing its towering front, sign of the sublimity of God's thought. Under the western sunshine was the valley of the York River, in the deep green and the surpassing beauty of the present summer, showing the wonderful finish and perfection of God's workmanship. All around were the rolling fields in their fertility, and the sombre groves with their bird-songs, emblems of God's infinite love. Then the sunshine, token of the dazzling and ineffable brightness of God's wisdom. Then the dark, dense bank of cloud, reminding the thoughtful observer of the judgments of God, hidden for a time. Then the eclipse, like the afflictions of our earthly lot, which hide, or partially hide, from our dim and finite sight the radiance of God's wisdom and love. At that moment, when the eclipse was encroaching constantly upon the sun, there came out upon the northeastern sky a vivid and beautiful rainbow, one of the

most distinct I ever saw, blessed type of the mercy of our Redeemer, compensation for all the darkness of the eclipse, for all the terrors of the cloud, for all the mystery of the sea, for all the hidings of beauty and riches in the valley and the river and the forest and the field. That singular conjunction of sea and mountain, of valley and woods, of gentle river and threatening cloud, of ominous eclipse and hope-inspiring rainbow, I shall not soon forget. So God mingles our life full of the tokens of his displeasure and the tokens of his grace. The earth, in all its histories and through all its centuries, is made profoundly sad by the sufferings of sin; is made more memorably bright by the redemptive love of Jesus."

Even in vacation he enjoyed thought and study such as he ordinarily gave to his sermons. Novels were, except to a very limited extent, distasteful to him. When seeking perfect rest he could not deny himself the pleasure of theological reading. After such occupation he wrote this paragraph of criticism:—

"I have been reading three Baccalaureate sermons: one on 'Perfect Love,' by Dr. Mark Hopkins;* one on 'The Bible,' by Dr. N. Lord;† and one on the 'Imagination,' by Dr. A. D. Smith.† Dr. Lord is philosophic, mystical, erratic. Sometimes his thought is very original, arresting, and pertinent; sometimes it is far-fetched and of doubtful application, showing a powerful mind, but a more questionable judgment. Dr. Smith is clear and interesting,—less argumentative, less condensed, more rhetorical. The present discourse on the 'Imagination' is, I judge, one of his most powerful sermons, and yet it lacks the sense of easy motion and of natural force which belong to Dr. Hopkins. Of the three preachers, Dr. Hopkins gives me the strongest impressions of a rich, exhaustive, truthful discussion of a particular theme. He is equally philosophic and argumentative with Dr. Lord, going into reasons, bringing out principles; at the same time he has more beauty of illustration and is much more clear, appealing to common-sense and the universal consciousness of all minds. In delivery he is the least animated of the three, but his sermons and books read most admirably."

Letters are here introduced, all written in 1870, not to illustrate any special epoch in Dr. Foster's life, but to show the

* Ex-President of Williams College.

† Deceased Presidents of Dartmouth College.

man. The first is to his son, then out of health. After urging him to give up all plans of work, come home, and rest, he says:—

“Dr. Dwight overworked in his preparatory course, and it was supposed his constitution was fatally undermined. He went to Northampton, and for years after his ministerial license, worked on a farm, until exercise and air and new scenes and new objects of thought had given to him muscularity and power. Rev. Dr. Day, president of Yale, was supposed to be sinking into consumption at one period of his early manhood, but special wisdom and constant watchfulness prolonged his life beyond ninety. Rev. Dr. Ide, of Medway, was in a state of such feebleness when settled, that he did not expect to live six months, and lay awake all night before his ordination, considering whether he ought not to withdraw his affirmative to the call and stop proceedings. Yet God’s blessing upon thoughtful precautions has kept him with us to this day. My inference is this, that with time and rest, and reviving influences, God’s Providence aiding, your health may be restored, and that all matters of expense, all questions of settlement, all ideas of brain-work, should be made wholly secondary, while we all unite in a long pull and a strong pull to secure for you more bodily vigor.”

The following letter indicates the demands that were constantly being made upon him for outside services, why he conscientiously performed those services when he could, and how with his advancing years and increasing feebleness he was obliged to do less and less in this direction.

“APRIL 25, 1870.

“I preached an installation sermon last Wednesday in Groveland, Rev. J. C. Paine’s. It dragged me down and dragged me out, as all such public, exciting occasions do. They appointed me moderator of the council. That I declined. Such a responsibility and display of public examination and public criticism would worry me to death. I have promised to preach an installation sermon in Essex next week. But I think I must put on the brakes hereafter upon all these foreign public demands. I have not strength to perform the duties I owe to my own people. I have consented to take these important services abroad only that I might maintain undiminished my influence at home. A favorable estimate of a minister in the community and in the surrounding churches,

is one of the great sources of power. But if I have not already earned that estimate, I am too late in the day and too feeble in vitality. I had better stop short and consecrate myself wholly to the performance (inadequate as that must be) of home duties."

The succeeding letters were written to his wife, then at Saratoga with a sick brother. They show the vein of playfulness in his nature, which he conscientiously held in check throughout his ministry, and which constant illness greatly diminished, and yet which was ever breaking forth most unexpectedly and delightfully.

"JULY 17, 1870.

"*My Dear Wife*,—I will spend a few of my vacant moments in writing to you a vacant letter. I will arrange my thoughts under three heads, telling you,—I. What I know and you don't. II. What you know and I don't. III. What we don't either of us know.

"Head the first.—Our sidewalk looks very beautiful, and if we had eleven or twelve little boys and girls, it would be the funniest place to roll a hoop you ever saw. Yesterday, we had peas from our garden, first-rate. To-day we had apples from one of our trees, fried into sauce, first-rate. The flower-beds are blossoming full. Our house is as cool as a cucumber. One thing more comes under Head first, *i. e.* if you walk to a post-office, half a mile away, in a hot day, and fail to find a letter which was expected and was due, it has a very depressing effect on the spirits and the health, and the walk home in such a frame of disappointment is very likely to produce sun-stroke.

"Head the second.—You and A. reached Saratoga Wednesday night, very tired and sleepy; glad to get within the reach of medicinal springs; glad to get out of the sight of ministers and all their kin and all their botherations. You have been introduced to Rev. Dr. —, of New York City, and Rev. Dr. —, of Brooklyn, and Rev. Dr. —, of Albany. You have come to the very just conclusion, that the minister with whom you are more particularly acquainted is a poor stick by the side of many of his brethren. You have drank of the Hathorne spring, and of the Congress spring, and of the Empire spring, and of the Columbian iron tonic, and still cry, 'It is not enough.' You have been into the Indian wigwam, and have bought a feathered arrow, tipped with bone. You

have sat in the great parlor of Union Hall, to see General Grant go by, and also to hear the music of fiddles and of flying feet in the dance. You have ridden by the race-grounds, and have peeked over the fence to see the blooded horses run. You have heard it predicted that France will conquer Prussia in war, and that this Republic, rather than allow France to seize Cuba, will put her oar into the waves of tumult and blood.

"Head the third.—This division of my subject might be made very long, but for want of room, must be short. The moon is made of green cheese. The roof of our house will leak badly next winter. One other thing ought to have come under Head I. I think of you a great deal. I adore you.

"I am your affectionate husband."

"*My Dear Wife*,—I wrote you a letter last week, which you may not have received. It was written in a style of awkward friskiness, very like an ox, whose nature is to draw in the plow, and whose flexor muscles are hardened by toil, attempting to run a race with an Arabian, or to gambol in the pasture with the colts. Please consider all my banter and playfulness as canceled, while I put on again the sobriety which is appropriate to my character and my office."

The next extract gives a terse and graphic *résumé* of the experiences of his son and daughter-in-law, then travelling in the White Mountains with horse and carriage, in search of health. It also shows the intense delight Dr. Foster took in his garden.

"JULY 25, 1870.

"A. and H. are at North Conway, leaving there for Burke, Vt., to-day or to-morrow. Their exploration of Mount Washington and its adjacent peaks and gorges, of Franconia Notch, of the Willey Notch, of the Lake of the Clouds; their ride up the mountain in the railway car; their tarry over night at the Tip Top House, with clouds hemming them in morning and evening; their successful hunt after flowers of Labrador and Greenland, found nowhere else in North America; their finding of two remarkable butterflies; their paying two dollars for a breakfast of heavy bread, chickory coffee, and uneatable eggs; their pain at discovering one of the eyes of Bessie, their horse, stung by a bee, and swollen as big as my fist; their jubilee at escape from perils; their long sleep of four hours after rising in vain at four o'clock to see a sunrise on Mount Washington; their unprecedented ecstasies and their incommunicable rap-

tures at all the diversities and sublimities and wonders of northern New Hampshire,—are they not all written down in the chronicles which are reserved for you to read?

“I hate to leave our garden. Pies and sauce from our apples, number one in quality, we have had for a week; two ripe tomatoes yesterday, and half-a-dozen more to-morrow; a nice cucumber from our vines last night; string beans from the upper lot for dinner to-day; peas of the second planting before the week is out; green corn in abundance, and the best early-rose potatoes will be ready by the middle of August. Our flowers are not abundant, but beautiful: petunias, four; scarlet tassel, four; nasturtium, six; sun-dial, five; phlox, a dozen; balm, a dozen; balsam, one; mignonette, twenty; portulacca, thirty; eschscholtzia, sixty white and forty yellow,—have all appeared. The china asters, the canary bird, the madeira vine, the cypress vine, the peony rose, the climbing roses, and other rare plants are not yet blossoming, but nicely growing.”

This garden, under his assiduous care, had now become a place of rare fertility. Every inch of ground was put to good use, and the earth, even down to the subsoil, was turned over every year with his spade. Besides apples, cherries, plums, and grapes, it had a great variety of pear trees of his own planting, which were now in good bearing order. How much he thought of these trees appears in this somewhat remarkable instance of memory, in an extract taken from a letter written while he was away from home:—

“I am glad to know all about the house and the garden. You will find, I suppose, the pears, in the order of their ripening. 1, the Buffum, with sixty or seventy fruits; 2, the Boussock, near the west door, twelve or fifteen fruits; 3, the Hardy, near the south grapes, four or five fruits; 4, the Sheldon, next tree south of Buffum, ten or twelve fruits; 5, the d’Anjou, three trees adjacent to each other, some twenty fruits; 6, the Howell, two dwarf trees, below the house, twenty fruits; 7, the Bonne de Jersey, four dwarf trees, twenty fruits; 8, the Duchesse, two trees above the house, sixty or seventy fruits; 9, the Dana’s Hovey, next the Buffum, a winter pear, thirty fruits; 10, the Vicar of Winkfield, next to the Danas, a winter pear, six fruits; 11, the Onondaga, a winter pear, below the house near the street, twenty-five fruits, large,

juicy, and acid; 12, the Winter Nelis, two trees, below the house near the north lot, a winter pear, twenty-five fruits."

The next extract gives a pleasant glimpse of a ministerial association, such a meeting as all Congregational clergymen are in the habit of attending four or five times in the year.

"The Association at my house was a pleasant one, except that the attendance was very small. Bros. S. and G. both absent. Two turkeys to supply dinner for the reverend and beloved; only eight ministers present, and one turkey untouched. S., F., F., H., F. fulfilled their parts. My sermon on the Pilgrim Fathers was well picked to pieces, an operation equivalent to the eating of the second turkey. Quite a difference of opinion came out on the question of uniting with Unitarians and Universalists in Sabbath-school meetings. Mr. S. goes for them. Messrs. S. and W. and G. argued negatively. H. silent. Mr. Fisher* has not yet joined with his people in the Union. 'Hopes he shall have wisdom to guide him aright.' Mr. F. is a thoughtful, cautious, far-seeing man, lacking somewhat the glow of the orator and the illustrative power of the poet, but possessed of a solid, contemplative, well-informed, argumentative intellect, and of very deep and warm sympathies. His extempore discussion of the 'Elements of Success in Pastoral Labor,' was very fine. Evidently he attaches great importance to such labor, and has great success in it. He has seldom failed to get a sympathetic hold of any family that he visited.

"The chief use of the scalpel on my sermon was to cut out all the illustration, history, anecdote, metaphor, episode. If I would be commonplace, it would be a great improvement. Every brother thought I was too exuberant, so abounding in amplifying thoughts that hearers would lose the thread of connection and get confused. Bro. P. 'would go a good many miles now, to hear me preach a sermon wholly devoid of illustration,—bald, totally bald, limited to half an hour, and made up entirely of abstract truth.' Mr. H. discussed the subject of 'Fear as a motive to be presented in the pulpit.' It was a very clear, logical, conclusive argument, reaching conclusions somewhat different from those of Brother Murray, in his Music Hall sermons."

* The late Rev. Caleb E. Fisher, of Lawrence, Mass.

The following extracts are autobiographical in their character: —

“LOWELL, Jan. 24, 1871.

“*My Beloved A*——, — I must catch a little period to write to you, although I am driven beyond measure, and am pressed by weariness of body and distraction of brain almost out of life. During the week of prayer and the two Sabbaths adjacent, I made twelve extempore addresses, and preached one hundred and twenty-six pages of manuscript, every word written during that time and the week before. The whole constituted eight solid hours of talk. The three sermons were ‘A Review of the Year,’ on ‘Prayer,’ and on ‘Individual Influence.’ Last Sunday I had two sermons, on ‘The Peace of God like a River,’ and ‘The Joy of the Angels’; the whole of the first and half of the second written last week. I have to prepare a sermon for next Sabbath, in the Y. M. C. Association course, on ‘The Energy of Christian Hope.’ It rejoices me greatly to know, as I learn from your letters, that you are writing sermons with an eager, absorbing interest. Of course, no man can succeed in any work in which he does not delight, and above all other occupations, writing sermons, demands, in order to success, an enthusiastic soul. To have the orator’s glow in the closet,—the same profound sympathy, kindling ardor, intense earnestness, which are awakened in the true extempore orator by the presence of a public assembly,—I believe to be the surest omen and token of eloquence. When Daniel Webster had finished his eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, he remarked to a friend, that in writing the speech which he had put into the lips of John Adams, the page was wet and blotted with tears. I believe that the minister who never cries in writing a sermon will never make anybody cry in hearing it.

“With the little amount of money I can put into books, I had rather have it spent for sermons than any other kind of theology,—Caird, Kerr, T. Binney, J. Hamilton, Liddon, Garbett, Bernard, Wadsworth, Shepard, Wm. Adams, A. C. Thompson, A. P. Peabody, have published volumes that I wish for. As to larger works, I should choose as follows: Porter’s *Human Intellect*, McClintock and Strong’s *Encyclopædia*, Storrs on the *Constitution of the Soul*, Guizot’s *Meditations on Christianity*, Goldwin Smith’s *Three Statesmen*, G. P. Fisher’s *Essays*, Shedd’s *Homiletics*, Hoppin’s *Homiletics*, Hagenbach’s *Rationalism*, Barnes’s *Essays*, McCosh’s *Intuitions of the Mind*, Taylor’s *Restoration of Belief*. Have you Woolsey’s *Sermons*,

and McCosh's and Shedd's, and the Philadelphia Lectures (Wm. Adams, Schaff, Haven, etc.), and the last Boston Lectures, and Burr's *Ad Fidem*? These are volumes I wish to get.

"Which do you go for as governor of Massachusetts,—Loring; or Butler, or Jewell? Which do you go for as next president of the Republic,—Grant, or Boutwell, or Chase, or Hoffman? Which do you go for as ruler of France,—Thiers, or Napoleon, or Chambord? Which do you go for as president of Yale,—Porter, or Thompson, or Storrs? Which do you go for as champion of literature and prince of preachers,—Murray, or Talmage, or Beecher?"

The extract that follows was written to a young minister, perplexed with not uncommon parish troubles. Its humility, wisdom, and self-forgetful spirit help us to understand why Dr. Foster never had a personal enemy in any of his parishes.

"I preached, soon after I came here, six years ago, against balls and dancing and such like frivolities; yet two or three families of my church send their children to dancing-school, and justify the measure. My first presentation of my views, as to vain amusements, have delivered my conscience. Dancing is not so obviously and undeniably a sin as to make it a test of Christian character. Opinions differ; social customs differ; reasonings as to manners, refinements, and graceful accomplishments differ. It is not for me to make my conscience an authoritative standard, when standing on this debatable ground. If a respectable majority or minority of the church conscientiously believe that these vain amusements, whist and dancing, are not essentially sinful, and are not greatly harmful, they must stand or fall to their own Master. I do not cast them out as aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, nor rebuke them as if they deserved to be so cast out. They know my opinions; I have expressed them; I refrain from the questionable practice; and there my responsibility stops. Precisely so of Masonry and other secret societies. I was besieged once, twice, three times, four times, to join one of those here. I declined by letter, giving my reasons frankly and unambiguously. There my action and my duty stop. These principles I have acted upon for thirty years. In conversation with a brother minister on this subject, he somewhat harshly criticised this method of action, and had much to say to me of moral courage and decisiveness and positive power. I leave it for the history of the future to tell which influence is most positive, decisive for the removal of evil and

the upbuilding of right. It is a marvellous combination to reach, the true blending of holy boldness and Christian wisdom. The minister, not less because he is wise and holy and considerate and tender of others' feelings, must be prepared to bear these sufferings. We live in the midst of finite minds, liable to misinformation, misinterpretation, and mistake. This is true even of the best. We live in a period of criticism; and ministers, far more than fifty years ago, are subject to the searchings of a fastidious taste, a doubting science, and caviling world. It is not an unheard-of thing for ministers of highest devotion to Christ, and of large ministerial gifts, and an ultimate popularity and power such as the world acknowledges with admiration, to fail to satisfy some good men. Dr. Wayland, when in Boston, was visited by an earnest Christian brother, who advised his pastor to ask for a dismissal, on the ground that he (the visitor) did not like Dr. Wayland's sermons. 'Neither do I like them,' said Dr. Wayland. 'No man can see their imperfections so clearly or feel them so deeply as myself. I advise you to go and hear Brother Baldwin, or Brother Stillwell, or Brother Sharp, — they are powerful and acceptable preachers. I shall not feel injured if you leave my congregation.' The two men then knelt down and prayed together, and wept together, and when they arose the disaffected member had new views. Ever after he had a love and admiration for Dr. Wayland, which many waters could not quench and many vicissitudes could not change. Rev. Dr. Hopkins, the great theologian of Newport, had a similar experience with his congregation. He preached for six months before settlement, and a growing dislike was distinctly apparent. He gave up all idea of installation, wrote a farewell sermon, full of humility and love, prayers, tears and groans, preached it, and the heavenliness of his temper and the power of God's Spirit changed the whole audience from indifferent hearers to warmest and life-long friends. We must all live and learn, trying to lift our sermons up to a higher and nobler platform, and if we cannot obviate defects, bearing patiently and forgivingly the mention of those defects."

In 1871, the church edifice of the John-street Church was largely reconstructed. As the work went on, Dr. Foster wrote regarding it in this half-comic and half-serious vein: —

"OCTOBER 16, 1871.

"Repairs in our church are progressing somewhat slowly, but it is a more extensive job than anybody at first supposed.

When the church is modernized, front beautiful, vestibule spacious, stairs convenient, galleries enlarged and lowered, lights brilliant, pews cushioned above and below, pulpit made into a lawyer's bookstand, recess bringing in back sunshine, walls frescoed, ceiling whitened, making in effect a reconstructed and somewhat costly temple — what then? Why, then, old wine won't answer in the new bottles; and new champagne will be needed to give a more sparkling and effervescent drink. Eheu! eheu! I have passed the dead-line of fifty; am near the deader line of sixty; shall I ever reach the deadest line of seventy? It is singular what a power of freshness, of purity, of vivacity, of original thought, of unanticipated brilliancy, always piquing curiosity, often touching deep pathos and high genius, belongs to the young minister. Well, I like to hear the young ministers myself. I am obliged to confess it. I always did like to go to commencement, and hear the youths, new fountains just gushing out of the hills, morning stars rising for the first time over the horizon, flowers of an unknown variety appearing in the garden, promise of genius and power, omens of coming good to the country and race, centre of loves and hopes and joys. I bid all young ministers God speed. I rejoice in the auguries of their usefulness. I thank God for their beauty, their hopefulness, their ardent aspirations, their springing advancement."

More autobiographical letters, written in 1872, are here inserted.

"JANUARY 20, 1872.

"*My Beloved A*—, — The weeks and the months are passing, now slowly stepping, now swiftly flowing, as sadness falls, or as light is glowing. And yet you do not write to me. Please tell me why. Are you sick? If so, write one word, that I may send back a drop of sympathy to express my love, if not to impart comfort. Are you offended with me? If so, tell me for what. I am perfectly unconscious of any cause. Are you driven with work and oppressed with care? If so, remember that for eight years, during your studies at the Academy, at College, and in the Theological Seminary, I was equally driven and oppressed, and yet I failed not at all (or very seldom, if at all) to write you a weekly letter of some eight pages. Remember, still further, that I am fast becoming aged and feeble. I am cut off from a score of recreations, in lectures, concerts, conventions, ministers' meetings, social meetings, literary clubs and reunions, rides on the railroad, rides in the steamship, rides

in the carriage, jaunts on the mountains and on the prairies, travels in foreign lands, which give to younger men refreshment and delight. Remember, also, that God in His holy providence has taken from me a large proportion of my children, quenching dearest hopes built on their earthly lives; that I am left comparatively alone; that my heart hangs on you with a fond abandon and a despairing grasp; and that if you leave me to swim alone, I shall go down in the waters, speedily and hopelessly. Remember, again, that I am by constitutional temperament, and by all the habits of my life, not elated; that I am now passing through a crisis in John-street Church. Our debt is considerable, and we are anxious with regard to lifting it. I am struggling in deep waters; if you can stretch out your hand to me, to hold me up, please do so.

"Do you find yourself preaching with freedom and ease and with a sense of God's presence with you, in your new church and to your new congregation? In my own experience, when I went from Henniker to Pelham, from Pelham to Lowell, from Lowell to West Springfield, from West Springfield to Lowell, it took me two or three months to throw off all chains of constraint and to get the perfect sense of a home feeling. Then, in each case, my mind seemed to break into a new field of liberty, as if my wings had grown and clouds had been dispersed and mountains had sunk into plains, so as to give me a wider field of view. I have no doubt that in my own case, in my excitable, sensitive, enfeebled condition, it was necessary for me to throw myself out of the ruts; break away from perplexing and hindering difficulties; to surround myself with new hopes and aims and helps. I believe that sixty years ago a minister could be settled for life, like Dr. Storrs of Braintree, like Dr. Blanchard of Lowell, like Dr. Spring of the Brick Church, New York, and hold on for forty or fifty years, with tranquillity of mind, with enduring strength of body, with ever-increasing spiritual and intellectual power. But the standard of preaching has changed. The calls upon a minister's time are greatly multiplied. The confusion and the excitements and the distractions are tenfold more; and he must be an extraordinary man, both in bodily vigor and mental elasticity, who can hold on for fifty years without a change and the use of old preparations and the stimulus of new associations.

"I have been reading Taine's Literature, and I dislike it exceedingly. His preference of French frivolity and corruption over English purity fills me with amazement. His false theories as to the sources of genius and the various agencies which educate and exalt the faculties, make me indignant. His

failure to appreciate such a mind as Milton's, and to form any proper estimate of Christ's religion, makes me sad. The book has splendid passages, but it is a dangerous one to put into the hands of a young man who has no fixed principles of literary philosophy and of religious faith. I have been reading the report of H. W. Beecher's Jubilee Week. Grand and beautiful was such a meeting, and such a quarter-century's review. Grand and beautiful are the results of that ministry, if the three thousand members of that church are all Christians; if the mission branches, growing out of that parent stock, are all inspired by the spirit of Christ; if the whole harmonized system of Beecher's teachings is built on the foundation of the gospel. The testimony of such men as Dr. Storrs, Dr. Budington, and Lyman Abbott is very valuable. Sometimes I think Beecher has done the greatest work, in the power of popular impression, of any man since Luther. I have nearly three hundred published sermons of his in my newspaper rolls. I have kept them for nearly twenty years. He is absolutely inexhaustible. Time will test him and his work, and the Lord will reveal in the great day. He has some startling errors, thrown out, apparently, not as a fixed theological opinion, but as a transient policy, a tub to the whale, a spoon to the fish, as much as to say, 'I should n't bite a bare spoon, but there is an immense lot of absurd fishes that will, so I throw out a shining spoon!' He has also a large number of valuable truths, powerfully expressed, for which the Lord be thanked, if he does not use the truth as a rim of sugar to render palatable a cup of poison."

In April, 1872, Rev. J. D. Potter, the evangelist, came to John-street Church by invitation, and labored several weeks. The subjoined letters describe the work.

"LOWELL, May 6, 1872.

"*My Dear A*—, — The blessed work of God is still going on. I preached yesterday, and, at the close of the morning service, I judge that three hundred persons rose, testifying by that act their purpose to seek Christ, or, if they were members of the church, to reconsecrate themselves to the service of the Lord, and to commence new efforts for the salvation of souls. One hundred of these I presume have recently been awakened to a sense of religious worth. In the evening meeting, — a prayer-meeting for the church and an inquiry meeting for the impenitent, blended into one, — seventy-five or eighty rose for prayers. Sabbath-school teachers were requested to report to

the superintendent the number of scholars in their classes recently hoping in Christ. More than fifty names were handed in. Ten men, all new converts, rose in the evening and spoke for Christ. Tears were in all eyes,—of joy for the past, of anxiety for those now unconverted, of hope for the future. Our meetings for this week are all like the one Sunday evening,—for prayer, and inquiry, and the testimony of new converts. We are laboring in the day-time, pastor and church, as far as possible, to reach all our families again, by personal religious conversation. We shall continue these forms of labor through this week and next week. All hearts seem wonderfully open to the influence of conversation, and anxious to know, by personal counsel, the way of life.”

“*My Beloved A*——,— My health continues infirm. My cough is oppressive, and my strength is very small. Last week I lost four of the seven days’ meetings. •Yesterday I was not able to be out in the afternoon. Calls for labor are multiplying upon me,—calls that are urgent, important, delightful,—and yet my strength is totally inadequate to meet them, and seems likely so to remain. We had a prayer-meeting and an inquiry meeting combined, in the body of the church, yesterday afternoon,—inquirers sitting in the centre, Christians on the side aisles. It was a most impressive and blessed meeting, with undeniable marks of the Holy Ghost,—such a meeting as we have not had in John Street for more than twenty years. More than a hundred rose for prayers, and most of them expressed an earnest determination to seek the Lord,—not all expressing a hope in Christ, but nearly all an intense and deep-seated wish to be Christians. Probably thirty of the one hundred came out clear and decisive for Christ. Some of their testimonies yesterday were exceedingly clear and emphatic, as they rose before five hundred people and proclaimed their fealty to Christ and their joy in the Christian consecration. I never heard a more decisive, intelligent, unqualified announcement of love to Christ, and of the evidences which indicate true conversion, than I heard from some of them. I think some seventy-five of our congregation are under deep conviction of sin; I think half that number are hoping in Christ. The work thus far outruns our expectations, outruns our largest faith. It is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes; it is the infinite riches of His grace. We bow down before Him in adoring thanksgiving. Continue, I beseech of you, my children, to pray for us.”

"REV. H. G. SAFFORD :

"*My Dear Brother*, — Yours of the 25th instant is received. In the month of April, 1872, Rev. J. D. Potter labored with my people a fortnight, preaching two sermons daily, conducting a prayer-meeting of half an hour before each sermon, and an inquiry meeting of half an hour after each sermon. . . . A marked and decisive religious awakening followed in my congregation. Many were present from other churches, though we failed to secure union services. I suppose one hundred and fifty, at least, professed hope in Christ as the result of these meetings. Forty-six joined my own church at the July communion following. They have adorned the doctrine of their profession. Strong men in their prime, young men and women of culture and promise, just entering the sphere of active life, were among the subjects of the work. Mr. Potter's labors were preceded by much visitation and prayer among my people, and were followed by the same Christian fidelity. It is impossible to assign the relative measures of influence. I can only say that one of the happiest revivals ever experienced in my ministry was granted through divine grace."

In July, 1873, Dr. Foster accompanied his son and daughter-in-law in a carriage drive through the White Mountains to Bethel, Me. The following extracts, the second one covering a postal card, were written on this delightful journey.

"JACKSON, N. H., July 27, 1873.

"*My Dear Wife and Daughter*, — Here we are, in the midst of the mountains, spending our Sabbath. We have been out to walk. I left A. and H. and M. one hundred rods back in the woods, by the falls of the Wild Cat River, where the stream rushes down a long succession of cascades, where its bed is the everlasting rock, the granitic ribs of the earth, entirely immovable till the heavens be shaken and rolled together; and where the water, carrying stones in its plunging current, has struck an eddy, set the stone into a whirl, and caused it to grind out a basin more symmetrical than any pot or kettle of the store. Some of these pots, ground into the solid granite, hold a pailful, some a barrel-full, and some are so deep as to hide a man standing within them, and wide as the outstretch of his arms. There A. and H. were with their Bible and their guide-book, studying the works of nature and reading the words of God. I went to the top of an adjacent hill, four

hundred feet in height, and there the mountains lay couchant and slumbering on every side. I counted twenty, each as big, seemingly, as Monadnock, and no one of them more than two miles away. There they stand, grim, giant sentinels (if it is lawful for me to wake them up, when I just said they were asleep), watching over the plains below to keep them from harm; looking off upon the histories, the sorrows, and the follies of this round world; testifying to the nations and the centuries of God. Mount Washington I could not see. It is twelve miles away, and the place where I stood was so low that it was hid from me by intervening summits. When I see the king I expect to forget the rest; but thus far in this region, the baby mountains are bigger than any adults I have seen before.

"We went to church this morning and heard a sermon from Rev. Mr. H——, an English Methodist, from the text, 'Turn to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.' It was plain, unimaginative, practical, impressive. I could not but think of the stronghold of mountains which the Covenanters found, and yet Claverhouse slew them; which the Tyrolese found, and yet the Austrians overwhelmed them; which the wife and children of Cornelius Campbell found, and yet Chocorua murdered them; which Chocorua himself found, in the tops of majestic rocks, and yet the bullet of Cornelius Campbell pierced him through. We are prisoners of sin and of despair, of darkness and sorrow, prisoners in a dungeon where Hope holds the key. We may turn to a refuge more sure than any chain of mountains, however imposing by nature, however fortified by art, to the Lord, our Rock and our strong Tower."

"SHELBURNE, N. H., July 29, 1873.

"*Dear C—— and N——*, — We journeyed yesterday from Jackson Falls to the Glen House, ten miles; to Gorham, eight miles; to this place, five miles. We made the acquaintance of several of the old colonial fathers and revolutionary saints, — Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Clinton, Clay, Jackson, Imp, Mott, Hayes, etc. They were glad to see us, and asked us to stay longer. We found them very communicative and agreeable; instructed in geology and botany; full of elevated thought; specially booked up in history and the fine arts. It rains. Bethel is fifteen miles away."

"*My Dear Wife and Daughter*, — We reached Bethel two hours ago all safe, we trust all well. We have had a delightful ride. We have ridden two hundred and five miles. If A.

had taken the straightest road he would have saved fifty miles, but would have failed to see any of the mountains. He passed up the west side of Lake Winnepesaukee, a much more bold and rugged road than on the east side, by Wolfboro'. The mighty hills which hem in the lake, send down each its foot to the water, and the road for twenty-five miles runs up a hill and down a hill into a glen, then up a hill and again down a hill, climbing over these several feet of the mountains, probably more than forty or fifty slopes. The road is more difficult, but the views are very much more fine than on the other side of the lake. From Centre Harbor to North Conway the roads are more level, passing around, in a semicircle, Chocorua and his majestic friends. From North Conway to Bethel you pass around another semicircle, going through Pinkham Notch, cutting directly across the Mount Washington range,—the first fifteen miles uphill, the last twenty-eight very much downhill. The roads in the White Mountains are kept in perfect order, at great expense. I shall not attempt to describe Mount Washington. Words are poor, and thoughts are inadequate, and the intellect faints and reels before the tremendous majesty of this rock-embattled and wooded monarch. His pedestal is a mighty base of continental dimensions, eighty miles or more in circumference, and on this raised throne, with his subject mountains scattered in every direction, the king of the mountains lifts his head. Those who stand on the summit can probably appreciate him, but riding through the ravines of the Notch and looking up through the trees, I could not fully measure him. He looked to me like a terrible thunder-cloud, black, illimitable, inaccessible, and threatening, piled up in the heavens. I do not know but I could get familiar with him and call him brother and friend, but he seemed to me like some ferocious and couchant monster, ready to overwhelm and destroy me. One conviction assuredly was pressed in upon my soul, that of the French preacher in the presence of Death, 'God only is great.' The breath of the hills is balm; the song of the birds is an echo of the inward melody. Let us call upon our souls to bless Him. But I am tired, and must lay down my gray-goose quill, *alias* golden tip and silver handle. How strange that our geese are no longer of any use! Their quills are obsolete, and so are their feathers. The most miserable night I have had since I left home was on a feather bed, the best one on a straw bed. Looking things all over, I guess I love you."

In the fall of 1873, Dr. Foster wrote certain letters to his son, from which extracts are here taken. They will explain themselves.

“NOVEMBER 3, 1873.

“*Dear A*——, — I send you by express six volumes and a roll of papers. I like the subject of your proposed lecture.* If you write out on each of the points of your programme an argument, with consecutive thought and illustrations corresponding, you will have material enough for more than one lecture or two, and it will be very rich and very germane to the times. I am sick to-day and unable to accomplish any amount of thinking or writing. Most of the questions proposed in your letter, will be answered by the scraps I send. I think I should not refer to actresses, Siddons, Kemble, Cushman, Rachel, Mars, or Mowett, or any of the rest, with approbation. These women had great talent, and some of them were personally pure, but many actresses are not pure, and the theatre is a corrupting agency. The tendency towards this pleasure, in all our youthful circles, is now violent and alarming. A thousand dollars or ten thousand would not tempt me to say one word which, by any implication or twist, could be supposed to favor theatres. I should expect to betray exemplary young men and young women into false views of life and character, to the soul's eternal loss.”

“DECEMBER, 1873.

“I was sick last week with sleepless nights and drenching sweats and protracted headaches, partly the result of a constant attendance upon Miss Smiley's meetings, and of my great anxiety regarding them. I think their influence will be permanent and beneficial. The lady is a highly-cultured, spiritual, and impressive preacher. She quickens Christians in the best way, by clear and instructive views of truth. She had not the first sentence of clap-trap from beginning to end.

“I send you the books, and I pray the Lord to endow you, dear A., with his best gifts for the sermons. If you can overthrow the occult and subtle and plausible skepticism, which is entering our families and pervading the minds of our reading youth, you have done a great work. There are bold attacks on the very foundations, by Huxley, Tyndall, Darwin, Spencer, Mill, Emerson, Weiss, Frothingham, Lubbock, and others. There are side-thrusts and secret underminings by men who stand nearer the evangelical line, by Maurice, Martineau,

* “Woman; the Sources of her Power.”

Kingsley, Murray, Hedge, Freeman Clarke, and others. I think the second class are more dangerous to our conscientious young men than the first."

A letter in acknowledgment of a substantial Thanksgiving remembrance from loved parishioners runs thus:—

"LOWELL, Dec. 3, 1873.

"MR. AND MRS. BROOKS:

"*My Very Dear Friends*,—We wish to thank you with earnest gratitude for the token of your remembrance received last week, the evening before Thanksgiving. If I were to call upon memory for her best service, I could not recall all the proofs of your love,—carpets, tables, firkins of butter, baskets of pears, discounts on interest money, sums in the bank, and what is of more priceless value, words of encouragement, hand-pressures of kindness, wrestling prayers, an influence in the city everywhere and always sustaining and complementing my ministerial labors. God has given me many valued friends, but of all the counsellors and helpers, whether of my youth or manhood, whether of my early or later ministry, none are more highly valued, none more truly invaluable, than yourselves. May God reward and bless you!

"My dear Mr. and Mrs. Brooks, your health is feeble, and so is mine. We have passed the summit, we are on the downward slope, and are not far from the end of the solemn drama of life. I wish to give to you assurance of my deep conviction that you have rendered to me essential help in this great life-work. We are all dependent upon one another, more than we know; the minister most of all is dependent upon Christian helpers. I have leaned upon you and leaned hard. If you get to heaven first, I hope you will be near the golden gate, if God shall give permission, to be my angelic convoy to the throne. If I get to heaven first, I will wait for you on the border.

"With true and grateful affection, yours, E. B. F."

Another, to a parishioner, gives a glimpse of his methods and faithfulness in pastoral work.

"*My Very Dear Friend*,—I feel an inexpressible anxiety for your spiritual welfare, and that of your family. I have received from you great kindnesses. I am deeply grateful. I have marked with delight the warm-hearted, generous, magnanimous traits of your character and life. But are these enough to give an entrance to heaven? 'One thing is needful.'

There is one spiritual, indispensable treasure. The Giver of that treasure is Christ. The seal on that bond is faith. The treasure itself is holiness of heart. Among your valued possessions is that laid up, the costliest, the best, the most highly prized? Pardon the importunity of your pastor, who loves you, who admires you, who longs that you may have the clear evidence of salvation. My heart has been burdened with prayers for you and for your family for months and for years, and especially for these last few days. My health does not allow my going to see you. I have thought you would not be unwilling to receive this line. . . . With your known sincerity, with your decisiveness, with your perseverance, with your combined counsels and prayers, the offering of yourself to Christ would be most precious. May God guard you and keep you! May He guide you by His counsels and bless you evermore! Your pastor and friend."

Dr. Foster used frequently, at the beginning of the year, to preach a sermon on the eminent dead of the previous year. At the close of 1873, he did this, speaking of Major-general Canby, Admiral Winslow, as representatives of the army and navy; of James Brooks, Oakes Ames, and John P. Hale, among Congressmen; of Chief-justice Chase and Judge Nelson; of Lewis Tappan and Edward Hitchcock, among Christian business men; of J. P. Cleaveland, Richard Storrs, John Todd, Zedekiah Barstow, Gardiner Spring, Joshua Leavitt, Henry Wood, Thomas Guthrie, among the clergymen; — in each case drawing some appropriate lesson, and occupying both forenoon and afternoon with the subject. It was in the spring of the same year that Charles Sumner died. Dr. Foster prepared a very careful discourse on his life and character. The following correspondence regarding it is inserted here, as most manly and creditable to both parties concerned in it.

"APRIL 15, 1874.

"My Dear Pastor, — Allow me to say to you with frankness, what I have desired but hesitated to say heretofore. I listened to your discourse on Charles Sumner, before our congregation, with intense pleasure and admiration. I thank you for it. It is, in my judgment, one of the most successful productions of your life. Your appreciative picture of Sumner was admirable, and worthy of yourself, as it was accurate and just. I think

there was one prominent trait in Sumner, which I should have been glad to have had you make more prominent, and that was his forgiving spirit. His great heart knew no revenge, except such as the inflexible laws of justice will bring. To this law he committed, with no resentment, all his opponents. His treatment of Brooks, his assailant, against whom he never uttered a bitter word, was one of the sublimest pictures of moral grandeur in all history. One thing more. You do not need to say, you ought not to say, that in the difference between Grant and Sumner, you think Sumner was wrong. How can you think so? If you think so, how can you say so? Your discourse will sometime be printed. That sentiment alone mars it. Leave it out. You do not know that Sumner was in the wrong; men differ in opinion upon that; therefore it is safer to insert no doubtful expressions. Do not leave a scratch upon a picture so beautiful, so grand, as your discourse is.

“Your sincere friend.”

“APRIL 16, 1874.

“*My Dear Brother*,—Your favor of the 15th instant is before me. I thank you for its generous estimate of my address on Hon. Charles Sumner. I thank you also for its frank and manly criticisms. Between friends of searching study and independent thought, there should be no weak concealment, even though differences of opinion arise. So long as man is finite, and instructed by earthly and inadequate evidence, these differences cannot be wholly avoided. So long as Christian love conquers, these differences need not interrupt esteem. I suppose that you and I must continue to differ in our estimate of the personal quarrel between Sumner and Grant. You attach more of the blame to Grant; I, more of the blame to Sumner, for that one unfortunate event of history. The verdict of future centuries, and of God’s judgment, can alone settle the conflict. The country is divided in sentiment; Republicans are divided; noble men, of various creeds and parties, are divided. What the new lights, which are to rise out of the horizon, may show, no man can tell. These new evidences may modify the opinions of us all. No one can hold your own convictions in higher consideration than I do, and from no beloved friend can I differ in opinion with more reluctance and pain. Out of deference to your views, I will omit from my discourse that passage which relates to Mr. Sumner’s disagreement with the Republican party. Affectionately and very truly yours.

“P. S. I accord entirely with what you say of Mr. Sumner’s magnanimous forgiveness of Brooks. It was wonderful, and most admirable.”

On this topic he subsequently wrote to a friend as follows :

"I am satisfied that a great and terrible struggle is before the country, within the next three years, between the forces of political selfishness on the one hand, and political integrity on the other, and that the preservation and success of the Republican party are the only salvation of our liberties. When Mr. Sumner broke with the Republican party, he lost his anchor ; he floated out into the changing, turbid, stormy sea of the unregulated Democracy. He was on the tide, which no single will can resist and turn back, — where Daniel Webster sunk ; where Rufus Choate sunk ; where Horace Greeley sunk. I believe, when you trace the history of the Democratic party, comprehensively and profoundly, in its relations to slavery and to great constitutional questions of human rights, you will find it is not safe to put the nation in its power. I did not think so before the war ; I have had no other conviction since. I have also believed that every high-minded and patriotic man would come out from the Democratic party, sooner or later, and that, as a party, it would die. I have once more unrolled my volume of journalistic extracts, which I have been gathering for thirty years. I have re-read Mr. Sumner's speeches on the Trent case, on the Alabama case, on San Domingo, on the one man (Johnson) power, on the impeachment of Johnson, on Grant, on Greeley, on the removal of Motley. I have read Goldwin Smith's reply, Fish's reply, Conkling's reply, Marshall Jewell's reply, E. R. Hoar's reply. I can only say that I think Mr. Sumner was wrong in driving his difference with General Grant to a personal quarrel, and in driving that disagreement with an individual to a rupture with the Republican party. In my discourse on Sumner, I have put that conviction of dissensus and power, as I believe it to be, and then add, not a 'scratch' of the painter's pencil, but a wart which was on the good man's face. Wendell Phillips somewhere says, 'There are four names forever to be remembered by the black race, with honor and with praises, — Ulysses S. Grant, Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, and William Lloyd Garrison.' I should erase John Brown from that list, and put into it Charles Sumner. I believe that thus far in our history, God has given to us four heaven-selected men, endowed with wonderful individual qualities adapting them to their work ; foreordained, in the counsels of the Almighty wisdom, to lift our nation out of bondage to foreign power, out of the barbarism of slavery, out of the political blindness, and the schemes of time-serving

expediency, which involve the ruin of the republic. Those four names — and I place them in the order of their providential position and power, as I estimate that power — are, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Charles Sumner.”

But it had already become evident that Dr. Foster's health was too seriously impaired to permit him to labor on longer as he had. For eight years he had carried on his work continuously in Lowell. He was now sixty-one years old. His habits of intense study, bringing a terrible strain upon a body permanently enfeebled in college, had so completely destroyed his health that he could not continue at his work. From this time on he grew weaker and weaker, with an occasional momentary lighting up of the old fire, until at last the vital spark quit an emaciated frame. The subsequent eight years of life were really one long-continued but steadily weakening conflict with death. A letter to his son, written at this time, gives interesting facts.

“LOWELL, April 13, 1874.

“*My Dear, Dear Son*, — Yesterday I preached my last sermon in the John-street pulpit for six months to come. I hope that rest will recruit me. If it does not, my ministerial work is ended. I am faint and feeble; have sleepless nights and anxious days; have hardly strength to saw my wood; cannot walk half a mile without my knees giving way, and shooting pains through all my bones. I confidently expect that exercise and air, and the recreation of the summer, will give me back my power to labor. For this I pray, and I ask for your prayers. My people have voted to continue my salary during the summer, and to pay for the supply of the pulpit out of the church funds. They have been exceedingly kind to me, and my debt to them is very great.”

The action of the John-street people in thus giving him a long vacation, was most hearty and sympathetic. Nor was the kindly feeling confined to his own church. The Andover Conference, a body representing a score or more of Congregational churches in Lowell, Lawrence, and Andover, by a rising vote, adopted a warm expression of sympathy for him in his

illness, and of appreciation of his services to the church and the world.

The vacation of six months was spent in East Burke, Vt., in a most delightful family of cultivated Christian people. The letters which follow were written during this period.

"HANOVER, N. H., June 13, 1874.

"*Dear N—*, — To-day, at eight o'clock, A. M., we started with A.'s horse and wagon for the Centre, rode to my father's old homestead, found Mr. F. and wife, native Yankees and sensible people, owners of the farm; went on to the tops of the rocks and gazed at Moose Mountain, four miles long; at Ascutney Mountain, twenty miles away; at the 'Town Plot,' my father's noble pasture; at the old orchard, worm-eaten and well decayed; at the 'mowing lot,' where I have toiled till I could toil no more; at the rooms where I have played and where I have rested; at the graveyard, where the 'forefathers of the hamlet sleep'; — and then we came away, with a sad farewell to the well-remembered scenes of my childhood. Do you find pleasant roads, and beautiful scenery, and elegant houses, and mountains of sublimity, and lakes of placidity, and streams of gurgling melody, and meadows of flowers, and gardens of pears, and pastures of flocks, and hill-sides crowned with majestic forests? This is a very remarkable world, and even if I were an angel, I should love to look at it. I think the angels are looking at it. I think the new heavens and the new earth of God's renovated and spiritual creation, will look very much like some of these spots of beauty."

"EAST BURKE, VT., June 18, 1874.

"*My Dear A—*, — East Burke is not a place of broad plains like Bethel, nor of ocean views like York, nor of city privileges like West Springfield, — but I like it exceedingly. These valley roads, pushing on through interminable glens; these charming hill-sides, where no granite crags or boulders thrust out their heads; these magnificent woods and fertile fields, — are a constant joy to me. The grand old mountain that towers south of our chamber, the brook that rushes and gurgles and sings east of our window, the hills that swell in such beautiful proportions on every side, are a very good substitute for the rote of the sea, for the sublimity of Adams and Madison and Washington, for the more quiet and tranquilizing symmetry of the Androscoggin valley.

"P. S. I wish to say a word about H.'s touching postscript

as to Early Rose potatoes. How do you suppose, daughter of mine, that I can succeed in cultivating Early Rose potatoes, or sweet corn, or hyacinth bulbs, or pear trees, or any other flowering shrub, with the whole arrayed opposition of son and daughter, daughter-in-law and wife, brother and sister, parishioner and friend, doctors of law and doctors of medicine and doctors of theology, and other professors of religion, and especially of elegant manners, standing in my front, and beating me back in my laudable endeavors? I do not think that even Luther could have battled so many foes, and triumphed in his mighty contest for right. Nevertheless, I will tell you, first, what I have done, and second, what so good and veracious a man as Judge C. C. N. promises shall be the result. I have hoed thirty rows of Early Rose potatoes and corn, each of them containing eighty hills, and each of them requiring about one hour to hoe. I keep up with Judge N., hill for hill and stroke for stroke, and, he says, amazingly energetic strokes too. I have worked forenoon and afternoon about six hours a day for five days, some days working only in the forenoon and riding out for fun in the afternoon. Judge N. said he supposed from my first letter, proposing to plant and cultivate an acre, that I wished to carry about thirty bushels of potatoes to Lowell. I failed to get here in time to plant. He then provided, as I requested, for a certain amount of hoeing. He says that if I help him considerably he will send me four or five barrels of potatoes in the fall, and I think one of them will go to Chelsea. 'Help him considerably'? I guess I will! Bring on your scythe and your rake and your pitchfork; I am ready. There, Mrs. Inquisitor, what do you think of all that?

"Your loving father."

"JUNE 22.

"*My Dear N—*, — You ask me what I think of Henry Ward Beecher's opinion as to Adam's sin. In the first place, I think we have committed sins enough, knowingly, voluntarily, and wilfully, to bring upon us the just and endless condemnation of God's law. We had better forego all speculation about Adam's sin, and repent, in dust and ashes, of our own sins, and cast ourselves upon the mercy of the Redeemer, without delay, or we shall be lost. In the second place, I think that our relation to Adam is the same as yours to me, or as mine to my grandfather: it is a hereditary transmission of character, of which we make no complaint, and which we can never change. You and A. may think it a misfortune that you inherit somewhat of my melancholy temperament, but you

cannot alter the dispensation. There are some advantages, as well as disadvantages, in our being born of Puritan ancestry; there are some blessings, as well as cursings, in our descent from Adam. Let the fact stand in both cases. I do not think we could better it if we should try. In the third place, I think that Christ, by His atoning death, has restored, and more than restored, the balance of loss by Adam, and we are called upon, not to cavil about Adam's sin, but to render adoring praise for the infinite and wondrous mercies of our God. We are better off than Adam was in Paradise. Salvation is as easy to us as to him. Our chance of future progress and glory, if we exercise faith, is greater than his was. He could not stand in innocence without watchfulness and prayer, without the determined, persevering exercise of holy choices. Holy freedom, the great prerogative of the angels, may be enjoyed and used by us, through faith in Christ, as easily, as largely, as by Adam, and with more blessed opportunities than he had."

"JUNE 29.

"*Beloved A—— and H——*, — There was a delightful thunder-shower last night, and this morning the mountains and the groves, the pasture lands and the cultivated fields, the distant trees and the nearer shrubbery, have put on their first-best Sunday clothes. The air is balm, the hills are beauty, the brook is music, the whole diversified aspect of nature is praise. You cannot think how I am charmed and gratified by the brook, or rather, you can think, for you have been here. I sometimes think I could sing a song to the brook, as Bryant did to the stars, or Wordsworth to the trees. As it comes into my sight, rushing down its cascades, playing its tune with sweet and liquid slide over the pebbles, singing the song which it learned in the dim recesses of the hills, stealing under the bridge, sending up its reviving power into the roots of the grass, hastening to the embrace of the river, pushing on with its almost living instinct to the sea, holding in its arms exhalations which will once more fly to the mountains, — it seems to me a glorious creature, obeying the behests of the Most High. I was awake this morning at four o'clock, and saw a sunrise as wonderful as that which Webster describes over the pine-clad hills of Virginia, a miracle greater than that which Adam saw, because it has been repeated, without a moment of deviation in time or an inch of faltering in space, for six thousand years. The shower of the night had left its fleecy clouds and its redundant fogs, and the sun glorified them with its golden light. Old Burke Mountain towered

over us in splendor; the distant East Haven Mountain sent back its tinge of blue; the hills around had on their deepest green; the robins and the orioles were straining their throats with joy; the frogs had ceased their midnight chorus; the chickens were out for an early worm; the cows were lowing for their pasture; here and there a breakfast smoke began to creep out of the chimney; and out of the darkness and out of the silence and out of the mystery, in the almightiness of God, arose a new day.

"Now for books. I have the *Boston Daily Journal*, the *Lowell Courier*, 'Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson' (Boyd), Nash on 'Morality of the State,' various books of Agriculture, various books of Law, some books of Fiction, and President Porter, President Hopkins, Professor Haven, President McCosh, and the false reasonings of Emerson and Theodore Parker. I have read by the day and the week in these profound depths. I should like to read by the year in that department of study, and by the life-time."

"JULY 1, 1874.

"*My Dear N*——, — Do you get time to read? What are you reading? Our reading in theology is Spurgeon's Sermons, Baxter's Saints' Rest, and Hannah More. I am more instructed and quickened by the woman's religious writings than by either of the others. For news, we have certain papers; for fiction, we have Charles Lamb, Emma Wellmont, and Mrs. H. C. Gardner; for travels, Mark Twain (foolishness); for literature, Eloquent Extracts, which I brought from Lowell;* for fun, a book of Agriculture. The fact is, we do not get much time to read. Too many brooks and birds are singing; too many trees and winds are whispering; too many thunderstorms are echoing with their divine voices; too many hill-tops, and mountain summits, and sequestered glens, are crying aloud — 'Look at me!'"

To a parishioner he writes: —

"We have a circulating library here, and books enough, — 'Murray on the Adirondacks,' but I cannot sympathize with him, either in deer-shooting, or trout-fishing, or horse-training. We have 'Notable Men and Notable Women'; but the most notable and the most attractive of all things to us, are the memories of Christian communion and Christian love and holy attainment in our own John-street Church, and in other churches of our acquaintance and labor. I do not depreciate

* His newspaper clippings.

the nobleness of eminent men of the world; but there are bonds of attachment which rise above all bonds of science or literature, of enterprise or business or politics, and join me to the heavenly fellowship, and join me to Christ,—and there the links will hold forever. We have the papers, and of course read something of the great sensations of the day, and oh, with what sadness and humiliation and fear! But after all the occupations and recreations that interest our minds, the absorbed affections will travel southward, and the letters of John-street friends are dearer to us than all else. We thank you, and we thank all our friends, for your remembrance of us. We thank our heavenly Father for the gifts of refreshing and saving grace imparted to the John-street Church and congregation. May the cloud of the divine love, now like a man's hand, cover the firmament; may the drops of mercy swell to a shower; may the cry for salvation fill the whole John-street house of worship; may the interest in religion, and the power of prayer, and the songs of the converted, spread like the swelling tides of the sea, through the city. My dear brother, I have deep sympathy of joy with you and with Mrs. —, in the grace of the adorable Redeemer, who has given to her His pardoning love. I anticipated this result before I left the city, from what I knew then of her anxious, prayerful search after the way of life. May grace and light and joy go with you both, in ever-increasing measure, to the end!

“I have spoken of my delight in the sublime scenery of mountains. I have had a very impressive view of the White Mountains recently. I have never been on the summit of Washington, but I stood last summer at the Glen House and at Gorham, where I could see Washington, and Madison, and Jefferson, and Clay, and Imp, and Moriah, and Surprise, lift their mighty heads, as the lions which Milton describes lifted their terrific forms out of the earth at creation's dawn. I could see them shake their shaggy mane, as the trees waved in the wind; I could hear them growl, as the condensed vapors gathered over their heads; I could look into their fierce eye, as the lightnings gleamed; I could rejoice that the Lord Almighty held them chained, lest they might leap upon me, and crush me out of life. I have seen the White Mountains this summer from the top of Burke Mountain, the highest peak between the White Mountains and the upper ridge of the Green Mountains. On the eleventh of this month, I stood on that commanding height. Twenty miles away, to the east, were Mount Washington and his compeers. Ten miles away, to the north, was Willoughby Mountain, broken by a vertical chasm

two thousand feet deep, and the beautiful Willoughby Lake sleeping at its foot. Sixty miles away, to the west, lay the Green Mountains, a long and stupendous chain, with irregular outline, like the surging waves of the ocean lifted by the howling tempest. All the intervening space was a country, wonderfully diversified, of hills and valleys. In some directions were forests, six or eight miles in diameter. Around our feet were a dozen villages, with their church spires shining in the sun, and their white houses and flowering gardens and cultivated fields sending up to our eye the tokens of thrift, and to our ear the hum of toil. It was a beautiful scene, its grandeur awakening awe; but its chief attraction was its evidences of comfort and plenty, and of God's wondrous love in making such a world for the habitation and joy of man. On that day, Aug. 11, the White Mountains were partly hidden by mist, and it was long before I discovered their vast proportions. For an hour I thought it was an immeasurable embankment of cloud. At last they stood out bold and high and broad and invincible. There was a thunder-shower between us and the White Mountains: we could hear its rattling peals; we could see the descending sheets of rain; we could mark the rainbow hues of yellow and gold; we could trace the blue sky in some directions, and the sunshine falling on maple orchards and on peaceful fields. All this diversity and richness and grandeur of view was beneath our feet, — even the thunder and the lightning and the rain, — all but that distant group of transcendent mountains. And in less than forty-eight hours after we beheld that view, the great and terrible storm of Aug. 13, fell upon these summits, tore their sides with avalanches, prostrated their forests with hurricane power, plowed their roads with impassable chasms, carried off their bridges on swollen tides, and made fearful havoc of their autumn harvests. Oh, the marvel of the mountains! Less illimitable, less mysterious, less terrible in shocks of tempest than the sea, they are even more likely, with their instantaneous terrors and grandeurs, to overwhelm the soul. We need to take years to traverse the sea, and to study it, in order to appreciate its majesty; but the mountains, in the short space of a day or an hour, fill the soul with wonder and awe, and subdue us into a sense of our own nothingness, and, if we have faith, into a sense of adoration."

"*My Dear A*——,—We have just passed through the galaxy of orations in colleges. They shine, somewhat as a comet's tail does, variously and uncertainly. Do you think that any

of them will be set as fixed stars in the sky? I think that Peabody at Andover, and Porter at Yale, and McCosh at Princeton, make addresses which will live. Evarts on Chase—like Schurz on Sumner, and like Adams on Seward, and like Choate on Webster—was a very able eulogy, but each and all of them, in my judgment, had their partisan pleas and erroneous estimates of character and of statesmanship. Which do you deem the highest model of character and attainment, a Chalmers or a Wellington, a Jonathan Edwards or a J. Q. Adams, a John Todd or a Charles Sumner? I have read two chapters of Dr. Hopkins' book on 'Conscience,' and the final summary and combination of man's faculties, entitled 'Outline Study of Man,' with great admiration. I find here two volumes of *The Eclectic*, for the year 1866. Its biographical sketches, its religious discussions of science and faith, some of its descriptions of foreign countries, are very fine. Some indolent *literati*, in their long vacations, lolling on the sofa or reposing under the shade, wish to read eternal novels of Smollett, or Fielding, or Reade, or Dickens, or perhaps eternal poems of Swinburne, Morris, and Whitman. I confess that this sort of reading, in my case, produces qualms of the stomach; and I prefer altogether to read the lives of Sara Coleridge, the sisters Hare, Mrs. Somerville, Miss Sedgwick, J. Q. Adams, Wm. H. Prescott, Fisher Ames, Josiah Quincy, Fowell Buxton, Wm. Wilberforce, Francis Jeffrey, Walter Scott, Thomas Guthrie, Thomas Chalmers; — those are the novels for me.

"P. S. I said in one letter that I was ready for the scythe, the rake, and the pitchfork. You will have to take the scythe and the pitchfork out of that list; they are too hard for me. Hoeing and raking I can attend to for three or four hours a day."

The extracts which follow are from a letter to his son and daughter-in-law while they were on a vacation among the Rangeley Lakes in Maine.

"AUGUST 8, 1874.

"*My Beloved A—and H—*, — I find my compassion very much drawn out towards you, in your barbarian dwelling fifteen miles from the nearest lights of learning in one direction, and in every other direction one hundred miles or two hundred miles from any human habitation. I should think you would need one or two ladies in your colony who know Greek and Latin, in order to preserve the balance and proportion of intellectuality. How interesting it must be to dwell

in the midst of smudges and ammonia; to fight black flies and moose-flies, mosquitoes and midges; to carry round blotches and bites; to wear tarlatan bags and wire nettings. Really, I think I should rather live in East Burke. I do not know but the broad bosoms of Mooselucmaguntic and Rangeley, with the elegant boats and the four-pounder trouts, might tempt me to bear your annoyances. Still, I believe I prefer East Burke. I think H. is very brave, and I hope she and M. will come out of the woods without being eaten up by flies and bears. I suppose you do not have to pay a large price for cord-wood, but I infer that your beef and mutton, your pork and beans, your flour bread and johnny-cake, your doughnuts and cheese, must be rather expensive. How would you like to swap a string of trout for a peck of raspberries? We can make that trade with you, and afford to give something to boot; for in picking berries we do not wet our feet, nor cover our faces, nor battle with an Egyptian army of insects. We have sixteen roads and three pastures full of raspberries, and have had grand times picking them. I am glad, dear A., that you have the love of truth and the love of souls which led you to preach to an audience of nine. Your usefulness may be as great preaching to nine as to nine hundred. Dr. Tyng once plodded through a snow-storm to find only one at meeting, and that a woman. He urged upon her, in earnest and eloquent words, Christian obligation, and she was converted; afterwards she was the means of leading his own son (the sainted Dudley Tyng) to Christ. After all, I hate to have you preach in your vacation. You need rest. Let the brain lie fallow. Raise a few weeds and plow them in. Nonsense and laughter and idleness and sleep and jolly songs are a good thing for you just now. Balance your eleven months' toil by six weeks' play. Do not make your intellectual labors so incessant, and your nervous anxieties so intense, as to oppress and overwhelm the muscular energy. I have preached only one sermon since the middle of April. I am obtaining a very grateful respite from weary and consuming cares. I hope that I am better, but I cannot tell at present. The machinery of body and brain is heavily worn and greatly enfeebled.

"Do you think that Jules Verne, in his imaginary explorations through earth and air and sea, adds to our actual knowledge, or, through the power of his fictions, to the quickening of thought and the education of the mind? I have not read much of Morris. I have received the impression that he belongs to the sensuous class of poets, and even to the sensual, like Swinburne and Whitman. Do you find it so in your read-

ing? Do you regard Hedge's 'German Writers' as a profitable book to read? There is a something,—a mysticism and a moonshine, about the Germans, an oddity and extravagance,—building air-castles and founding them on fog,—which makes their biographies more tiresome to me, by far, than English and American lives. If you find it otherwise, I should be glad to revise my conclusions."

On the 31st of August, Dr. Foster, in a letter, indicated his condition and plans as follows:—

"We shall stay here one week more. We expect to return to Lowell, Wednesday, Sept. 9. It is now doubtful whether I shall be able to resume my ministerial work, or any portion of it, at Lowell. The strong staff of youth is broken, the easy-going springs of manhood are dislocated, the beautiful rod of hope is bent; I fear that even the arm of prayer and the crutches of love, on which I now lean (for it is all my strength), will not hold me up much longer. I have been permitted, through the grace of Christ, to do a little for truth and for souls. I do not regret that little; I only mourn that it has not been more, and that it may not be longer. I have loved the ministry, I have loved my study, I have loved the place of prayer and the communion of the saints. My feeble service can easily be dispensed with. There are strong workers in the field, noble champions of the truth, consecrated servants of Jesus. We are living in troublous times of buffeting and of battle, when proud infidelities, exulting blasphemies, corrupting poetries, plausible sensualities, and false sciences are seeking to devour. But the Word of God, and the Son of God, and the Spirit of God, will conquer. Man is weak, sin is bold, but the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

"Rev. Dr. E. P. Goodwin and wife and their little son have been here a week. They left this morning for Chicago. Dr. Goodwin preached yesterday two of the most impressive sermons to which I ever listened. One of them, on 'The Humanity of Christ as an Aid to His Divine Purposes of Love,' stirred me through and through."

On his return to Lowell, his health proved to be, as he feared, not materially improved. He felt unable to meet his duties alone, and suggested to his people his need of a helper in his work. With great sympathy and kindness they acceded to his wish, and presently united in calling Mr. J. B.

Seabury, just graduated from Andover, to the position of associate pastor. Concerning these matters Dr. Foster wrote as follows:—

“LOWELL, Oct. 26, 1874.

“*My Beloved A*——, — The outlook for my future is in some respects brighter than it was, in other particulars it does not improve. My people, both church and society, have given a call, united and earnest, to Mr. Seabury. If he comes, he will take half the sermons and be mainly responsible for evening meetings and pastoral visitations. Mr. Seabury is in California, and will remain there six months. His answer is not expected for six or eight weeks. My people have adopted the one-sermon system for the present. This will be to me a relief, although my presence in the Sabbath-school and at evening meetings, and my prominence in making remarks, will be more anxiously desired than heretofore. The great sense of responsibility which I feel, and the great anxiety which oppresses me when these extemporaneous services are required of me, you know. It is doubtful whether on the whole my brain will not be as severely pressed by the present arrangement as by the former. Experience only can decide. My first sermon (Oct. 18), on the ‘Latent Power of the Church,’ was wholly new, was fifty minutes long, and was elaborately wrought out, consuming the whole previous week. Last week I wrote another sermon on the ‘Sources of a Noble Character,’ which I hold in reserve for next Sunday. I preached yesterday on the ‘Value of a Social Religion’; half of it new. I am invited by circular from the State Temperance Alliance to preach next Sabbath on temperance, and shall do so if my mind works easily and in force on that topic during the week. I find in starting my intellectual team (I was about to say colts), that have been out to pasture all summer, that they are somewhat frisky and unwilling and uncertain. I cannot write through long sessions, with such concentrated and successful thought as once. I can summon as much nervous energy and intensity for the moment, but it does not endure. Is there paralysis of emotion? Is there lethargy of the intellect? Are there stiffening of joints and decrepitude of strength and approaching death for all the faculties? I cannot tell; and if other people know, I doubt whether they would be willing to tell me. One thing I do know,—I know that social excitements, and hard pulls in the study, and long sermons in the pulpit, and evening meetings, are interfering sadly with my sleep. My first Friday evening and my first Sunday were full of agitation. My peo-

ple came out in crowds and greeted me most kindly, but my next two nights were as full of horrors as Dante's Inferno. So last Thursday night, we had the Ladies' Sociable with us, and a large company and a most cordial welcome back to my work, — a full house again yesterday, and one of the largest and best of all our conference meetings last night. But I pay the penalty in agonizing dreams and prostrate strength for subsequent days. I await the future with fear, and feel that I am liable any month or any hour to break down utterly.

"I have been reading the life of Henry Alford, Dean of Canterbury, Greek scholar and commentator, poet and sermonizer, lecturer, traveller, and philosopher. How beautiful and blessed the gift, when a man has deep learning and versatile talents and ready and powerful communication, to talk and write and preach! Thirty-four volumes, mostly religious, came from this one pen. He was as voluminous an author as Walter Scott or Charles Dickens, and far more profound and elaborate in thought and patient in evolving logical relations. I have not read his commentary on the New Testament, and I doubt whether he was not too much tinctured with the Rationalism of Germany. Do you think him thoroughly and uniformly sound?"

The letter which he immediately wrote to Mr. Seabury (as given below) shows the cordial feeling he entertained towards his younger brother, a feeling which he continued to manifest in all their subsequent relations.

"My Dear Brother, — You have received from the John-street Congregational Church and Society, a united and cordial invitation to become associate pastor with me in the spiritual care of this parish. Allow me to convey to you my own earnest wish that you should accept the call. My state of health is such, that if the whole weight of pastoral care continues to rest upon me, I shall be compelled to resign. I have had here a very happy pastorate of seventeen years, and should be glad, if the Lord has any more work for me in His vineyard, to accomplish that work with this people. I trust I shall be able to take half the sermons, and to be present, when storm and cold do not prevent, at evening meetings. For years I have not had strength to perform much pastoral labor, and it is expected that this service will devolve mainly upon the colleague. With the full sympathy of my heart I shall be interested in every service of the pastorate, and in every plan

for the spiritual advancement of the church and congregation. I doubt not that we shall be able to work together in perfect harmony of opinion and in the dear fellowship of love. I trust that I shall have a full appreciation of the demands of your position, if you accept, leaving you to the untrammelled exercise of manly thought and Christian independence. My belief is that, from the counsels of congenial minds and from the communion of praying hearts, we may lessen the crushing sense of responsibility, and increase our power to fulfil duty. I have a kind and sympathizing people; I have no enemy; I never had one within the limits of my congregation. I know not that I have ever had a severe and carping critic within that circle. They are characterized by independent thinking, and yet by unity and brotherly love, by great efficiency in the conduct of religious meetings, by reformatory progress on questions of temperance, freedom, education, benevolence, church work, political integrity, and yet equally, I think, are they marked by reverence for God's Word, and for the great principles which have been proved and established in the experience of the ages. They love and honor a faithful minister, and I think you will find that esteem given to you in ever-increasing measure.

"I am, in the bonds of Christian love, yours."

Mr. Seabury accepted the call, on the understanding that he was not to begin work in Lowell for six months. In the mean time Dr. Foster carried on the responsibilities of the pastorate alone. In the following extract it is easy to perceive the earnestness with which he worked.

"JANUARY 4, 1875.

"I am toiling on, rowing against wind and tide, but still toiling. I may be called suddenly and soon. I have many premonitions. But while I have any strength for brain-work, I expect to push my pen to the last quiver of the fainting nerves. I wrote last week an address of fifteen minutes at a funeral; a sermon of thirty minutes for preparatory lecture; a sermon of thirty-five minutes for Sabbath forenoon; a sacramental address of fifteen minutes; and an address for the conference meeting of last evening of ten minutes. More than half this amount was written first on note-paper with a pencil, then in larger letters for sermon reading, making an actual amount of writing in one week of more than one hundred and forty pages of sermon paper. I have another equally heavy

drive before me for this week, — prayer-meeting every evening, and review of the year 1874, if possible to be accomplished. I am too old and too much of an invalid to go into this severity of study, but I cannot help it so long as I am in this ministry. If I had the self-possession, and the promptitude and consecutiveness of thought necessary for extemporaneous sermons, I could make it easier; but as it is, I can do neither more nor less than to work like a dray-horse, and die in God's time. I have better digestion than eight months or a year ago, but I am feeble. I have sleepless nights; I have frequent chills; and after great anxieties or protracted study, I am thrown into a state of nervous exhaustion and disorder which is perfectly appalling.

"You have read, I suppose, Mr. G.'s reply to Dr. Holland on the connection between orthodox doctrine and a loose life. I wish Mr. G. would lay himself out with his usual strength on that theme, with a little less of laughter and persiflage and banter. It is not a subject for fun. I wish a strong pen would show what Calvinism has done for the development of the purest morals, and the highest heroism, and the grandest intellectuality, and what the Voltairean philosophy did to the morals of France, and what rationalism and boasting pride have always done to the family and to the self-denying traits of an exalted manhood. Go into the history of free-thinkers a little, and of the imaginative, literary, gifted souls that could cast off the trammels of doctrine. Recount a few of the facts pertaining to Hume and Gibbon, to Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley, to Auguste Comte and Stuart Mill, to Charles Dickens and Bulwer Lytton, to George Eliot and George Sand, to Goethe and Eugene Sue, *et id omne genus*, — and then see where the charge of immorality lies, and what sort of religious doctrines lead men down into the ditch of the drunkard."

Mr. Seabury was ordained and installed associate pastor in September, 1875. In a spirit absolutely free from self-seeking or jealousy, Dr. Foster speaks thus of the new pastor and the welcome he received: —

"A meeting of welcome followed the service of ordination, largely attended and marked by great cordiality on the part of the people towards the new pastor and towards me. I think I shall not be loved by them any less than before. I am deeply thankful that my associate wins their love with such

charm of manner, with such depth of sympathy, with such quickness of perception, with such gifts of conversation."

Dr. Foster's health at this time was very infirm, as the following letter, written most reluctantly to greatly loved parishioners, will show.

"DECEMBER 19, 1875.

"MR. AND MRS. S—— :

"*My Dear Friends*, — I thank you for your kind invitation to meet with your family and other friends at your house to-night. I have no strength to endure mental excitements; and the more instructive and enjoyable the company, the more the excitement. My nervous system is broken, and my brain fails me where I was formerly conscious of no such feebleness, and where most men, in the vigor of their mental action, would feel that all was play and enjoyment and success. After last Sunday's exercises, and after the delightful fellowship of Monday evening, I had no sleep, and Monday and yesterday I lay on my bed and sat in my chair all day long, with a constant sense of pain and total incompetency. I am near the end of my ministry in Lowell, probably of my ministry in any place. I wish to express to you my profound acknowledgments for your kindness, and for your most efficient help in the church. I admire you; I esteem and love you, and have from the beginning of my acquaintance with you all the time. Affectionately yours."

For two years more, however, Dr. Foster struggled on, striving to carry his part of the burden; but in the spring of 1877, he had a serious illness which confined him to the house for several weeks. On his recovery he was left much enfeebled, and his people kindly gave him a year of complete rest, and urged him to try travel in Europe, or a winter in Florida, for his health.

Before this year of vacation came, he had occasion to write certain letters, portions of which deserve insertion here. The first is written just after a visit to West Springfield among his old parishioners, when, feeling unusually well, he had allowed himself more than he ordinarily dared to do the pleasures of social intercourse.

"SEPTEMBER 21, 1876.

"I had a very precious and delightful time at West Springfield, full of encouragement to my disconsolate heart, though adding to the weariness of my brain. Every token of glad remembrance and friendly confidence was shown to me. We had invitations to tea every afternoon we were there, two invitations to dinner and two long forenoon rides. I had social interviews, either at their own homes or at my sister's, with more than forty of my former parishioners. I preached one sermon at each church, and the attendance was large. It is a blessed thing so to preach, so to pray, so to talk, and so to live that, after years in the ministry spent under the watchful and critical eye of a discerning people, they are ready to say, no matter how long the absence, 'Come back again, beloved pastor, for you are welcome to our homes and our hearts.'"

This note explains itself: —

"DR. N. ALLEN :

"*My Dear Friend*, — My state of health forbids my presence at the collation this afternoon, greatly to my regret. I am profoundly grateful to God for the wisdom and fidelity of the Sabbath-school workers of our State and country. Through all my ministry I have leaned upon this instrumentality as my help and hope. My mind goes back to the convention of 1857, held in Lowell, with very affecting recollections of Joseph White, Linus Child, John A. Buttrick, Dr. Blanchard, Dr. Edson, and yourself. I have long been impressed with the singular adaptation of the Sabbath-school to the conversion of the world. Next to the family and the pulpit, it is the leading agency of religious instruction. It has the quality of universality even more than they, reaching all classes and conditions with its heavenly lessons, and going into the darkest haunts of destitution and ignorance to pluck brands from the burning. May God spare you long, my dear brother, to devise and execute plans of love for the relief of human wretchedness."

The letter which follows is to his daughter, then at Wellesley College.

"I hope, my beloved, that you will not worry yourself about your studies at Wellesley. Learn what you can. This you have done and are doing. If your health does not permit you to remain, then come home. How welcome you shall be !

Study Latin with me, and Bancroft's History and Prescott's and Motley's and Macaulay's, and Milton, Longfellow, Bryant, and Wordsworth. The world is wide; opportunities of study are many; the intellect and soul of man are not shut up to any one method of study or discipline. Father Taylor had to have his texts read to him after he began to preach; he could not read them himself, and his wife taught him. Bishop Hedding studied Latin, riding on horseback to his preaching appointments, and whenever he came near his Methodist co-laborers and friends he had to hide his book. Dwight L. Moody has gained his power mainly from Bible study; he has no scholarship comparatively. Daughter of my heart, my hope, my joy, trust in Christ, your Lord, use what advantages you have, take watchful care of your health, have confidence in the future, and move on to great results."

Dr. Foster states in his own words the way in which he came to take this year of rest.

"MAY 15, 1877.

"*My Dear Son*,—The committee of John-street Society and Church, with expressions of deep sympathy, have requested me to make the coming year one of rest and recreation. I am to perform only so much labor and of such a kind as I feel that I can accomplish without exhausting and oppressive carefulness. This was the public vote at the annual meeting. I am seriously considering the propriety, or rather the necessity, of sending in my resignation. I feel that I am not able to do anything which deserves a decent salary. I feel also that I cannot continue on and hang on, here or anywhere else, as a dead-head. I am afraid that I am a coward, for I shrink from the poverty, the privation, the mortification, the inconvenience that are before me, if I am left without a pastorate. My future looks dark on every side."

"AUGUST 25, 1877.

"What God's purposes are for my future I cannot foretell. It is hard to be laid aside from Christian work. I shrink from death with a reluctance which I am sorry to feel, and which is strange in view of my faith and hopes. Life seems to me very beautiful and sweet. Life's relations, life's duties, life's privileges are very precious. I think I can say, 'I love Christ and His work; I know whom I have believed.' I am confident that to depart and be with Christ is far better. But oh, for a higher sanctification! Oh, for a more distinct and vivid view of Heaven's attractions and Jesus' love!"

This year of vacation was spent during the fall of 1877 at West Springfield, in working on his sister's land and in walks and drives through that beautiful valley; during the winter following, in Jersey City, at the house of his son; and during the spring and summer of 1878, in West Springfield again.

To this period pertain the following letters. The first is to his son, who was proposing, just after the railroad riots, a series of sermons on "The Relations of Labor and Capital."

"You refer to wages and strikes, labor and capital, matters of great delicacy and difficulty for the treatment of the pulpit. It is safer to keep silence than to make any hasty pronouncement. Labor-reformers like Wendell Phillips will go strongly for communist ideas, abhorrent to gods and men. Judge West, nominee for governor of Ohio, and Senator Sherman, are advocating a congressional law, fixing a maximum, on the one hand, beyond which laborers shall not demand wages, and a minimum, on the other, beyond which corporators shall not reduce wages. President Sturtevant of Illinois, Professor Sumner of Yale, David A. Wells, John Jervis, and others, are publishing books on Elements of Wealth, which deserve examination. President Bartlett, in his Bennington oration, states that depot-burners and law-breakers must be swept by grape-shot, and that secession traitors must be straightened by hemp, or all government is a fable. These are startling words, and what shall be done with these blood-thirsty violators of property rights is a most momentous problem. I have no doubt that laborers in some cases have been wronged, and ground under the heel of the money power. Great sympathy should be felt for the working-man, living forever in poverty and sickness, with the wolf at the door. I have just as little doubt that the interests of labor and capital are perfectly reciprocal, and that destruction of either one is the ruin of the other. The course of administration pursued by the Pacific Mills, Lawrence; by the Fairbanks brothers, St. Johnsbury; by the Cheney brothers, of South Manchester, Connecticut; by Samuel Budgett, as Bayne describes him in 'The Christian Life'; by Titus Salt, of England,—is worthy of study and admiration. I commend you to God and the light of His grace and the word of His power in this anxious deliberation."

The letters which immediately follow were written at West Springfield, in the fall of 1877. They give choice glimpses of his heart, of his literary tastes, and of his religious life.

“SEPTEMBER 21.

*“My Dear Wife,—*Your letters are a great comfort to me. Still, one thing I would rather have, and that is, yourself. Washington Irving found infinite delight in his nieces, and when absent in Spain or journeying in America, his heart was like a forsaken and wingless dove, bereft of its nest. Lord Macaulay, having a nature eminently domestic, centred all his affections upon his sisters. Upon one of them especially, Mrs. Trevelyan, he was as dependent as a little child upon its mother, and when she and her husband decided to go to India, the great heart of the historian was smitten with a fatal stroke, and he died. Poor celibates, both! They did not know the superior joys of home, of wife, and children, all their own, and only their own.

“My thoughts and my prayers and my longings are often in the John-street meetings. Her Sabbaths, how dear! Her communion of saints, how exhilarating and uplifting! Her Sabbath-school, what a fountain of sanctifying influences! Her families of piety and love, what a scene of happiness, what a safeguard in danger, what a preparation for holy and difficult duty! How shall I bear my great deprivation in this long absence? Lowell attractions become dearer and dearer to me, every hour that I live. Shall I ever sit down under my own dear roof-tree and worship again with high and holy enjoyment with my own dear people?”

“OCTOBER 8.

“I have been reading, Sabbath day and week day, the lives of Thomas Spencer, Samuel Pearce, William Milne, Philip Melancthon. Oh, for something of the divine unction and the spiritual power that rested upon these messengers of salvation, these sons of God, who were sealed upon the forehead with the seal of electing grace! I have known a few such: John Lord, Leonard Swain, Bradford Homer, John Milton Holmes, Nathaniel Wright Dewey. May their numbers be multiplied a thousand fold!”

The winter of 1877–78 he spent with his son in Jersey City. The following extracts are from letters written during his visit there.

“JANUARY 2, 1878.

“I have not yet become much acquainted with Jersey City. I am the poorest of all hands to explore in such a complication of paths, and in such a wilderness of brick and mortar. I have taken two rides, of five or six miles each, around the

edge of the Bay, and along the Jersey Highlands, towards Orange and Montclair. There are views which never tire,—views of New York City, of Brooklyn, of the Hudson River and the East River, of the suspension bridge, of the great Bay, of the steamers and the ferry-boats weaving their threads here and there, back and forth, obliquely and at right angles, seeming often as if collisions were unavoidable, yet swiftly rushing on. The architecture of parts of Jersey City arrests the eye,—the low-lying flats, where old ocean used to sleep, and where salt-water marshes are now found; the intertangled line of streets, where my poor, muddled head is lost; the crowded throngs on some of the avenues, and the jam of teams. I have been out to walk several times, but have to watch my bearings very narrowly, or I am plunged into lanes and by-paths and crooked streets, where I am as helpless as the babes in the wood; and if the robins and sparrows do not come and cover me up with leaves, I may think myself fortunate. I have not yet sought to study the science of journeying in New York. I might as well attempt to follow Kane to the North Pole, or Stanley to Lake Tanganyika. I attended one of A.'s prayer-meetings last Sunday evening, at the close of the year. Six youth rose to express a purpose to give the next year to God. Remarks and prayers were offered by six of the brethren, characterized by sound, plain, unostentatious thought, by humble, fervent, loving supplications. By such remarks and prayers I am always quickened and profited. Some complain of the lack of literary beauty and finish in prayer-meetings, where the common people speak. I believe that in answer to faith, God gives the power of the Holy Ghost to the educated and the uneducated, to the well-known and the obscure, to the adult and the child, to the scholar and the pagan alike, and that this illuminating and eloquence-bestowing gift of the Holy Ghost is infinitely stronger than science, and infinitely higher than art. The love, the faith, the experience of a truly spiritual mind, the unselfish, sanctified aims of one who longs for the conversion of sinners, are worth to me, ten times over, all the poetry and brilliant originality and literary accomplishment of Byron and Shelley and Poe, of Hume and Gibbon and Emerson, of Theodore Parker and Freeman Clarke and Ellery Channing, if you could crowd the mighty genius of the whole nine into one speech, and explode it in one hour.

“The tone of society here seems very much like that of Lowell, Chelsea, and Boston, marked by unconstrained affability and free cordiality, with a little more, perhaps, of the abandon of quick sympathy and generous regard. As to the

classical, oratorical, legal, and genius-like attainments of the two regions, the interchange of pastors back and forth, Griffin from Newark to Boston, Withrow from Princeton to Boston, Storrs from Brighton to Brooklyn, Hitchcock from Exeter to New York, Tucker from Manchester to New York; and the transfer of editors and lawyers, like Greeley from New Hampshire, and Raymond from Vermont, and Erastus Brooks from Maine, and Evarts from Massachusetts,—show that the literary standard and the measurement of gifts do not vary essentially with latitude and longitude. We are brothers. We have all sucked the milk of common schools. We have eaten the strong meat of Puritan doctrine. We have been dandled on the knee of economic hardship. Our literature is one. Our colleges are patterned after the same system. Our administration of government is central and universal. We speak one language; we believe in one Bible. And whether natives ‘to the manner born,’ or carpet-baggers from State to State, or emigrants from foreign shores, we are all in the Republican boat. I trust we are all to be in the evangelical ark, to ride out threatening storms, to cheer one another with sentiments of fraternity, and fixing our eye on the beaming Polar Star, Christ, to sail on to the shining shore.”

“FEBRUARY 9, 1878.

“*My Beloved Daughter*,—I am seeking for absolute rest of the brain. I have preached only one sermon for seven months. Probably I shall not preach again for seven months to come. I attend no evening meetings; I avoid all agitating talks; I read no heavy books; I enter into no profound researches. I love to hear A. preach, for it is the renewed life of my youthful and middle manhood, and the glad fulfilment of all my hopes. I love to brood over the memories of the past, which find their centre and their home in John-street Church, for it is the chief augury of good that cheers me for the future, it is the chief anæsthetic of pain which consoles me for my failures in the present. I love to potter over the newspapers, for, as a rule, though versatile in talent, they do not deeply absorb the mind. Yet I like the newspapers. So long as I live, the events of the hour, the revolutions of the kingdoms, and the speculations of the thoughtful, will have for me an amazing interest. When Blaine attacks Massachusetts; when Butler goes in for a ninety-two-cent dollar; when Conkling declares war against Hayes; when Pendleton and Thurman, Ewing and Voorhees, Tilden and Hendricks, are shuffling cards and wrestling in eager combat for the next presidency; when Russia is knocking at

the gates of Constantinople; when Hamlin and Thomas in the religious world, and Gladstone and Disraeli in the political world, are in controversy as to the righteousness of Turkey's cause; when Capital and Labor are glaring at each other with angry eyes, perhaps soon to unsheath the sword of war; when the co-education of the sexes becomes the shuttlecock and the football of eager combatants in the theory of the schools; when Reynolds and Murphy and Miss Willard are stirring cities and villages with a mighty temperance enthusiasm; when Moody and Whittle and Pentecost and Needham, and a thousand devoted pastors, and other thousands of the lay membership, are working for the salvation of souls, in the demonstration of the Spirit; when self-sacrificing missionaries are blowing the gospel trumpet on every mountain summit of heathendom, and in every dark vale of superstition; when Science is supposed by so many to stand in antagonism to the Bible; when Infidelity is loudly shouting forth its blasphemies; when the providence of God, by wonders of judgment, by mercies, by gentle influences, and by silent victories, is vindicating Christian doctrine, — I confess I like to read the newspapers; and ere I am aware, I am in the valley of Armageddon, and the hosts of Gog and Magog, with the armies of the Lord, are in battle array before my eyes. Still, in all this reading, and through all these agitations, faltering as I am in intellectual application, I am constantly gathering material for preaching, and turning all thoughts and all knowledge into sermons. The retired tallow-chandler must go down to the shop on melting days; the native German, long habituated to the language of our country, speaks again his accustomed guttural in the delirium of sickness; the renowned French conqueror, when dying, cried out, 'Head of the army, advance!' So I, though disabled and broken and set aside, cannot forget nor discontinue my sermons. Whatever I read, deep or shallow, solid or superficial, I am asking after illustrations and argument and proof, after beauty or pathos or power, after the means of quickening or conversion or sanctification, as much as the miner searches for golden ore."

To a young friend he wrote: —

"A loving heart! How complicated and how vast its energies! It is the force of the intellect; it is the secret of beneficence; it is the throne of goodness; it is the fountain of empire; it lights up the pathway of study with motives; it gives quickness and energy to thought; it gives abiding strength,

unconquerable resolution, skill, and energy to all faculties of the soul. Compare such a love to the law of polarity, for constancy, or the interchange of the seasons for regularity, or the diffusion of the morning light for beneficence! There is no just comparison. The heart is true, though the mariner's needle may have its deflections; the heart is true, though the course of the seasons is with pauses, changes, and unforeseen departures; the heart is true, though the morning light and the fragrant air may be darkened by clouds and poisoned by the breath of pestilence. Having thus an unselfish, abiding, sanctified love in the heart, all objects take their colors from it. As the color of the rainbow is in the reflected light of the sun, so the charm of goodness, of patience, of self-denial and heroism, of perseverance which holds on to the end, of bravery which endures, of energy which accomplishes, all take their bright and blessed hue from the disinterested love which is planted deep in the heart. Christ is the sun, affliction is the prism, life is the dark background, and then the virtues break through the rain-drops, bright as the rainbow is bright, innumerable in their forms of beauty as the kaleidoscope changes its pictures. You have seen afflictions. For one so young, in the disappointment of bright plans, and in the agony of bright hopes, you have seen deep afflictions. But may you not say that the Lord has been merciful and gracious and full of compassion? Is not His voice to you, 'In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but in everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer'? Affliction is like the summer-shower out of the stormy cloud. The cloud hides the sun and hides the beauties of the landscape. It is not pleasant to bear the shadows, the deformities, the discomforts, and the dangers of the rain. But there are greater distresses without the rain, and infinite compensations with the rain. There are days of brightness which will succeed the darkness; weeks of balmy and summery warmth, which will make us forget the cold; months of wonderful beauty which will outshine the eclipse; years of happiness which will atone for discomforts; defences against danger which will shelter us through life. So affliction has its remunerations and compensations. The soul shall be far more brave to fulfil its duties. The future shall be far more bright because of the darkness. Eternity shall be far more joyous because of these blinding storms of sorrow, these evanescent clouds of mystery. God sits above the storm. Christ comes to us through the cloud. There is an ark that carries us over the billow. There is a haven of perfect rest, and we are hastening thitherward."

“MARCH 4, 1878.

“My Beloved N——, — I will tell you what I have been reading for the last few weeks. Mainly the lives of holy men and holy women. I have within my reach Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot, but I turn from them all, having no relish whatever for that sort of reading. The lives of Mary Van Lennep, Isabella Graham, Susan Allibone, William Goodell, and Archibald Alexander have a perfect enchantment for me. I seem to be walking and talking with the angels. Oh, how their lives, their consecration, their attainments, their final beatitudes, delight me! Rev. Dr. Alexander, the Shakespeare of the human heart; Rev. Dr. Goodell, a strange mingling of sobrieties and comicalities, of human faults and saint-like glories; Mrs. Van Lennep, more like the Evangeline of Longfellow, or the Madonna of the painters, than almost any other; Mrs. Graham, thrice-blessed saint and leader of youth to Christ, — I admire them all. These, and Rev. Dr. Shedd’s Sermons, have been my meat and drink, spiritually, for many days.”

This extract is inserted as a single expression out of many, of the intense love he felt for his only living daughter, the one child God spared to him through life, and whose peculiar privilege it was to be by his side and minister to his comfort in the few years of weakness and pain which yet remained to him.

“I write now, though it must be a shorter letter, to give you renewed assurance that I gratefully remember your birthday; that I deeply and tenderly love you. It seems but a day since I held you a babe in my arms, with tears of thanksgiving and joy, with palpitating hopes of future comfort and blessedness in your society and love. It seems impossible that so many years have passed. No other twenty years, no other ten years, nor even five, are likely to be given to me in this world. And now I wish to lay my trembling hand upon your youthful head, and in the name of all the past, and in the hope of all the future, to thank and to bless you. You have been to me a very dear, a very affectionate, a very precious child. Make the will of Christ supreme over all your thoughts and desires. Let it be your great and controlling inquiry always — ‘What is right?’ Cultivate these virtues, my beloved. Cherish a thoughtful and anxious deference to the opinions of others. Investigate all subjects of moral obligation with studious attention. Judge for yourself of rules of duty, taking the Bible for your guide, and hold fast that which is good. I beseech you,

my dear child, never to forget that office and place, promotion and notoriety, do not constitute usefulness. You may be as honorable, and as happy, and as successful in leading souls to Christ in a quiet country parish, in a backwoods district school, in a restricted circle of plain, unpolished minds, as at the head of a female college. But I will not go on in this strain. I do not write this letter to instruct you with wisdom. I write to comfort and encourage you with sympathy, love, and hope."

It had, perhaps, been well if Dr. Foster had broken away from his old trains of thought, and have ceased exercising his mind so constantly and intensely as he did in its old channels. A physician in Jersey City, for whom he conceived a warm regard, told him he must read Cooper's novels, and live out-of-doors, and not think about a sermon for a year. But it was absolutely impossible for him to follow the advice. His next summer was spent in the residence of a former parishioner in West Springfield, while the family were absent in Europe, and there he found a full set of Cooper's novels. He faithfully set himself to read them, but after "wading," as he said, through one or two of them, he threw them down in disgust, and he sent word back to the physician that the task was impossible,—the hardest he ever undertook.

During this year of physical prostration, and of mental anxiety more hard to bear, the following letter from a highly-honored parishioner and valued friend was to him at just that time, as he expressed it, "worth its weight in gold."

"In your letter you refer to some remarks of mine, complimentary to your labors and sermons. Those remarks were made in your absence, and I was not conscious of the presence of any member of your family, or of any one to report them to you. They were not said in flattery; they were spoken from a sincere heart, in a spirit of entire truthfulness; mainly designed to encourage the somewhat faltering hearts of our people, by calling their attention to their very great advantages, and the necessity, or rather duty, of duly appreciating them; also, to awaken a feeling of gratitude to God, and of appreciation of your labors. However, I am not sorry that these remarks have been borne to your ears; and now that they have,

I have nothing to change or to modify. Your rank among the great preachers of New England, the enrolling of your name among the leading divines, whose names are so honored by the people, are secured. This is *fait accompli*,—your treasure is laid up where the moth and rust of time cannot corrupt it, and where no envious rival thief can break through and steal it. The great bulk of this wondrous accomplishment has been in the John-street Church, and among the worshippers there. The great benefit of this more than heroic achievement, this enduring life's work, accrues to the members of John-street congregation for the past twenty-five years. This great fact I wanted them to know and fully appreciate. As noble as your life has been in such an achievement, I desire, in the sweet confidence of pastor and people, to say that I especially honor you for your supreme consecration to your work, and your entire devotion to your position as the pastor and preacher of an evangelical congregation, and the simplicity, purity, and perfectness of your Christian character, as you have been for a quarter of a century in and out among us. No *ad-cupandum* efforts, labors, or speeches, now upon the platform, now in the ward-room, again in Grand Army and soldier circles, anon in collections of Odd-Fellows, Masons, secret associations; upon secular and semi-secular subjects; no profanations of the Lord's day, by speeches of doubtful moral and religious influence, in Huntington Hall and elsewhere, for the applauses of popular, promiscuous, and mixed assemblies, have ever marked your career. Thank God for such a pastor! Your strict confinement of your labors to your parish work, so natural to you, so consistent with your whole character, so beautiful, so admirable, so inconceivably potent in a parish in the city, and a community, is why I love you, and why your people love and honor you. They may not know the secret of their love and esteem, but I have studied it, and I know it. I have never known you to wander at all out of the path of propriety and consistency, in any public remarks on any occasion. When you had a public task to perform, I have never feared that you would say an imprudent word, any single utterance that could be turned into a desire for the applauses of the vulgar, the profane, the worldling. You have been a minister of the Gospel. You have had the high standard, the grandeur of the work, the necessary purity and simplicity of example, of that character ever before you. Or rather, I should say, these garments fit your native character, and have hung so gracefully and naturally upon you, that they seem to have been cut for you. This feature of your walk and ministry is your glory, and the great gift of John-street Church."

When this year of rest had come to an end, no material benefit had been received from it. It was plain at last that the faithful minister's life-work was ended. He could not again assume the duties which he had met so long and well. He must be free henceforth from all responsibilities. With great reluctance he prepared and sent in to his beloved church the following communication : —

TO THE JOHN-STREET CHURCH AND SOCIETY:

"Dear Brethren and Friends,—I hereby resign my office as your associate pastor. I am led to this most painful step solely by ill health. Through your great generosity I have been absent from you more than a year, seeking rest and restoration. I come back disappointed of my hope. Disabilities and pains still oppress me, so that it is impossible for me to perform the ministerial service which you have a right to expect. The labors of this pastorate for twenty years have been to me a perennial spring of joy. I have been refreshed and quickened in the divine life by your presence in the sanctuary. I have been lifted up to Heaven by your prayers and songs of praise. I have been instructed, and in many a perplexing question of duty have been safely guided, by your manly thoughts and your counsels of wisdom. In the exigencies of my own life and of the life of my family, in times of sickness and bereavement, and in circumstances of personal need, your sympathy and help have been opportune and abundant, and rendered with delicate tenderness. In every Christian labor I have leaned upon you, and found you faithful and true. You have visited my infirmities and defects with no harsh censures, with no withdrawal of confidence, with no coldness or indifference. From the depths of a grateful heart I thank you. I have occupied your pulpit one thousand Sabbaths, and have preached to you more than two thousand sermons. I have been with you in your homes and in your social gatherings, and have discussed with you literary themes, topics of national interest, points of personal history and experience, striving to make all knowledge and all conversation bend to the salvation of the soul. I have been with you at weddings and at funerals, and have been permitted to carry your case to God, I trust with heavenly consolations in the house of mourning and with devout thanksgivings in the house of joy. I have sprinkled the waters of baptism on the brow of many of your children, and on the brow of a larger number of adults, and I cannot doubt that it has been

the sign of a divine regeneration. I have admitted to the church hundreds of this congregation, and with them and with original builders of this sacred organization, deeply honored and truly loved, I have broken the bread of communion. I expect to sit down with them at the banqueting supper of the Lamb. These labors cannot be relinquished, these ties cannot be broken, without bitter pangs of anguish. I beg of you to pardon my faults, and to give me your continued love and prayers. While my obligations as a pastor cease, while my claim of salary ceases, I hope to spend the small remnant of my days in your city, to remain a member of your church, to enjoy the privilege of worship with you, to maintain social relations with you, to interest my mind as deeply as ever in your welfare, to render help so far as my strength allows in your religious meetings, to be buried, when I die, in your beautiful cemetery, where my children and my father sweetly slumber. I rejoice to leave your interests in the hands of the junior pastor, whom I greatly love, in whom I wholly confide, and with whom I believe the Spirit of the Lord richly dwells.

“Your affectionate senior pastor.”

The people recognized his necessity, but desired to preserve the pastoral tie unbroken, and so by vote, in November, 1878, released him from all duties, and constituted him pastor *emeritus*. At the same time they adopted resolutions warmly commendatory of his labors among them, and gave him and his family the use of a pew in the church forever. The church would gladly have made some provision for his support, but its financial condition warranted no stated salary. However, a late parishioner, Mr. A. L. Brooks, long a tower of strength in the church, and one of his most valued friends, had made provision for an annuity of one hundred dollars yearly, to be paid him for ten years while he should live in Lowell. His people also freed his house from the small mortgage still remaining on it; and generous friends in his parish, outside the parish in the city, and outside the city among relatives and friends, remembered his needs, so that his absolute necessities were met, and according to the divine assurance, the righteous was not forsaken.

Thus ended an active pastorate of more than twelve years, spent happily and usefully under disabilities of ill health,

against which a strong will and a thorough consecration made a gallant fight, but to which they were obliged at last to succumb.

Dr. Foster was pastor of the John-street Church for twenty-one years and a half. During this time, 403 persons united with the church, 238 of these on profession of faith. Of the last years of this ministry, Hon. George Stevens, a parishioner, writes as follows :—

“Whatever might have been thought by those who were strangers of the propriety or probable success of a second pastorate over the parish from which he, but a few years before, had withdrawn, no one who knew Dr. Foster, knew the John-street people in their relations to him, and who knew the mutual relations of pastor and people during the first pastorate, and the unanimity and thorough earnestness and cordiality of the second call, would have for a moment doubted the wisdom and propriety of that call and its acceptance. No pastor and people ever more thoroughly loved each other than did Dr. Foster and his congregation, during the first pastorate. The separation was trying, and the love only slumbered during the intervening years; it never died or decreased; and when occasion offered, it rekindled with all its original intensity. The congregation recalled him as naturally as a family recalls its own head who has been temporarily away. John-street people were capable of great devotion to a pastor. Dr. Foster was capable of thorough love for, and appreciation of, his people. This devotion and this love existed in all their intensity, in spite of temporary separation, and by an inevitable necessity brought the parties together again in the dear old relation, as soon as circumstances permitted.

“As the partiality of a true father leads him to regard his own children as superior to all others, so the nature of Dr. Foster made him regard and treat his own people as the dearest and best on earth. I desire much to emphasize this feature of Dr. Foster’s character,—his tendency to exalt and magnify the virtues of his own flock, and to overlook and forget entirely their imperfections. A small stream of affection, no matter how minute, from the heart of one of his own people, reaching his soul, brought back a river of love from him. There came constantly from him a fulness and richness of affection and sympathy towards all and each one of his loving people, that knew no stint or cessation. Every one knew that one grand loving heart was ever overflowing with benevo-

lence for him. Every one felt, My pastor will be true to me, will shield and protect me if occasion requires; no one can defame me in his presence; with him my weaknesses are all forgotten; whatever others may say and think of me, he will befriend me, he will hide my faults. Tears have flowed from eyes of which he never knew, of which no one on earth ever knew, at the very thought of the shield of Dr. Foster's love. His affectionate nature, so sensitive, so responsive to the touch of gratitude and affection, so utterly unable to see faults in others, and in this so natural, unaffected, child-like, so grand and great in its simplicity, made himself and every one about him happy.

"Has any one ever had a pastor who had the habit of grumbling about his people, a disposition to magnify their faults, to style them a hard, ungrateful, and unkind people, to complain of their treatment? Then he knows how such a ministry withers, blights, belittles, and crushes a people; how it embitters life, retards growth, dries up the fountains of peace and joy, engenders strife, disturbs the church, and dishonors God and religion. Everything that such a pastor is, Dr. Foster, in his second pastorate, was not. Everything that such a pastor is not, and cannot be, Dr. Foster was. This quality of his was very much the secret of his success, and of the abiding attachment for him. He was a retiring man, yet every young person, every child in his congregation, knew and felt that in his love they had more than a father. They loved him, they revered him, because, as a pastor, he was more than a father.

"The same untiring industry and complete devotion to his work, the same elaborate and thorough preparation for pulpit services, the richness of eloquence, study of current events, interest in living men, marked his second as his first pastorate. His style as a writer and speaker was fixed. It was his own, unique and without imitators. With him it was original; a part of himself; it exactly fitted him; it was his glory. None but one had Choate's style. There could be but one Choate as an orator. So among preachers, there could be no copying of Dr. Foster's style in the pulpit. His rhetoric was indeed gorgeous, but never too gorgeous for him. The profusion of flowers only adorns the prairie. There they are native. Dr. Foster's rich exuberance of rhetorical display only showed forth in beautiful fitness. The grandeur of the thoughts and imagination of the man,—it never mastered him, he ever controlled it and made it his servant. Coming from him it ever seemed only a proper and fitting adornment of his logic, argument, philosophy, and clearness of thought and statement.

"Dr. Foster was ever a great student of living men. He knew, followed in their career, admired, and profited by, noble men contemporary with himself, whether clergymen, statesmen, poets, literati, scholars, politicians, inventors, scientists, or railroad kings. All heroes, all successful men, in all callings, in all lands, were watched with an extraordinary interest by him, and the lesson of their lives was learned by him, and was stored away as part of his own rich mental furnishing. He was no imitator, but thoroughly appropriated what was valuable in the lives of great men. In our interviews he delighted to lead the conversation to a discussion of the men, measures, and movements of the times. Manliness, and the manifestation of heroic qualities, ever attracted and inspired him.

"There was about Dr. Foster a constant adherence and devotion to great and true principles. On every occasion, on every subject, you could trust him to discern the great, the true, the good, and to adhere to and maintain them. His people never feared that at some unguarded moment he would say or do that which would bring a single touch of shame or dishonor or lessened dignity. Manliness was native to him. He had no ambition for transitory eclat; no desire for applause at the risk of dignity, charity, truth, or prudence. All such praise he esteemed very dearly bought.

"Dr. Foster, like all characteristic men, left his impress behind him. Many years must pass before he will fail from the memories of his people. His marked figure, features, voice, selfhood, all linger. Their influence still controls, aids, and guides men. The memories of his tender entreaties, his earnest exhortations, his persuasive arguments, his loving, affectionate calls to wisdom and obedience, can only die with the generation which was favored with his ministry; and character will not fail to tell of him for centuries to come."

IX.—As Pastor Emeritus at Lowell, Mass.

1878—1882.

IN the fall of 1878, Dr. Foster, being released from all church duties, gave himself up to a quiet, contemplative life. He had no strength for any public care. He even felt unable to attend the ordinary religious meetings of the church. He cordially welcomed such friends as called upon him, and

greatly enjoyed their visits, but was unequal to going into society. At first he hoped, and his friends hoped, that he might be able to supply vacant pulpits for one or more Sabbaths at a time. To one so well known and so welcome in all the pulpits of the region, and in a neighborhood where the churches were so many, there would have been no lack of opportunities of this character. But to his great disappointment—for he loved nothing so much as to speak of Christ—he found himself completely exhausted whenever he attempted to preach, so that, after a few trials, he never entered a pulpit again. He touchingly describes his condition in these words :

*"Dear Brother W—, —*I am sadly compelled to withdraw the promise and the hope of my being able to preach for my beloved John-street people during Mr. Seabury's vacation. The strongest motives impel me to make the attempt. My plans and hopes and aspirations and joys are all in the work of the ministry as much as forty years ago. It is a glorious service in which to live and work and die. The world will not understand why I am idle, and I shall suffer in the estimation of good men by my silence and inaction. Poverty and suffering stare my family in the face, if I cannot do something for their support, by preaching. Still, I can only say that I am worn to the edge of the grave. I am maintaining a daily fight with death, and every instance of severe study, of anxiety, of excitement, of exposure, pushes me towards the dark abyss. I am not able to preach. Sleepless nights, pains in the spine, terrible headaches, frequent faintness and sinkings of strength, all admonish me that my remaining work is not to save the life of others, but to fit myself to die. And yet, if after this long struggle through the dark wilderness of sickness and sorrow, God should give to me, as he did to Hezekiah, fifteen years more of work for his blessed cause, or ten years, or five years, or one year, I should count it an infinite privilege. But for the present I must still lay by my oar, lean over the boat, and, mingling my tears with the salt brine, watch the changing tide. Twenty-two months ago I left Lowell to seek rest and restoration. After nine months' silence I preached for my son one Sabbath. The effort threw me back, most sensibly and most painfully, into my state of nervous exhaustion and suffering. Again I rested four months, and then attempted to preach two sermons in West Springfield, two sermons in Northampton, and one sermon in the Memorial Church, Spring-

field. The result was disastrous. I returned to Lowell in October last. Since then I have preached once in John-street pulpit, once in Kirk-street, and delivered my address at the fortieth anniversary of our church. In each and every case, my throbbings of the head, and of the related nerves, have come back upon me like a troop of inveterate and armed foes."

The last occasion during his life on which he came before the public, is referred to in the foregoing note, the fortieth anniversary of the organization of the John-street Church. On that occasion he made a short, but deeply interesting and tender address. He closed it with a reference to himself and his colleague, of such beauty and pathos, as to affect deeply all who heard it.*

After this he kept his house more and more closely, occasionally walking out, but more frequently, if he needed the air, working in his garden or sawing wood, or, if he desired other recreation, shutting himself up in an attic chamber commanding a fine view of the distant country, and occupying himself with his books and papers.

He was urged by friends to prepare some of the large accumulations of his past years of toil for the press. Many thought that valuable books, not only some of a theological and devotional character, but others, pertaining to politics, biography, and education, might be prepared and given to the public, which should be not only a means of good, but the source of a much-needed revenue. He went so far as to plan some of these works, and made a beginning in arranging them. But he found himself utterly unequal to the task. He had not strength to apply himself sufficiently, and, besides, he was so completely disheartened, that nothing he had written seemed worthy of preservation. But his feelings on the matter are best understood from a letter of his to a beloved and honored parishioner.

"*My Dear Friend*,—When A. was here he urged upon me suggestions heretofore made, that I should go into the book

* Quoted in Dr. Street's address, which is given on subsequent pages.

market with some of my wares; and he asked me to give him subjects on which I had preached or lectured, with some degree of system and harmony, so as to form a connected series of addresses. I gave him ten or twelve topics which I had thus treated, imperfectly, indeed, but at sufficient length to make a moderate volume. He writes me that he showed the list to you, and gave you reason to think that I might publish. I fear that he has awakened expectations and hopes which can never be realized. The programme was jotted down in an excited and sanguine state of my mind, at the opposite pole of my usual moods, partly to refresh my own memory of what I had written, partly to gratify him with a more definite view of the labors of my life. Alas, alas! I am wholly unequal to the task of revision, reconstruction, emendation, transcription, proof-reading, rejection of feeble thought, filling in of vacancies, enlargement of partial views, new evidences where proofs are insufficient to satisfy cavilers. The writing out of my fortieth anniversary address cost me days and weeks of pain. If I write half a day I am rendered well-nigh helpless by spinal agony, so that for hours I cannot stand erect. I would most gladly meet the wishes of my generous and noble-minded friends, in the matter of publishing some of my sermons, but I am a wilted leaf, and there is no strength in me."

After his death his family searched among his papers for familiar sermons and addresses, work that had been widely and warmly commended, and to their great grief could find only a small portion of the large accumulation of years. In his excessive self-depreciation he must have destroyed a large proportion of what he had written.

In these last days he wrote but few letters. His correspondence with his son almost ceased. His wife and daughter were always at his side, and wrote for him whenever necessary. He had little occasion, and, in his great feebleness, still less courage to write. When, however, he did put pen to paper, there was no diminution in the fertility and beauty of his thought. What he wrote showed as keen an interest in public matters and in religious thought, and as sharp a comprehension of their import, as had his writings in the past. Although disease had fastened itself with fierce and cruel fangs upon his body, his mind remained unimpaired.

A number of extracts from his letters are here subjoined, arranged chronologically.

“JANUARY 1, 1879.

“*My Dear A*—, — The ministry is to me just as sublime and beautiful and attractive a work as ever. All my longings are for it; all my delights, intellectual, literary, social, even physical, turn towards it. I have tried to get my mind out of theological ruts, to use Dr. H.’s term, — thanks to his generous heart and penetrating mind. But after all, I am compelled to say that theological ruts are to me the king’s highway, and more easy and joyful roads than any other. I count them more elegant, more soul-replenishing, more health-quickenings than any novel or history or exploration or newspaper or scientific essay or poetic imagination or political ratiocination or jubilant song. It is harder for me to break out from theology than for the lawyer to forsake his courts, or the doctor his patients, or the captain his ships, or the musician his piano, or the Hindoo his rice. Oh, sweet and heavenly and life-giving and soul-saving theology, how can I leave thee?”

“DECEMBER 17, 1879.

“*My Dear Wife*, — I have been wondering much why it is that my inclinations lead me to emigrate to the south with the birds, and yours lead you to emigrate to the north with the foxes. And I am led to inquire, which is the best model to imitate, those creatures which, with fur on their noses, burrow in the ground, or those nobler specimens which with light in their eye soar high in the air? I am thankful to D. and H. for their kind invitation to me to visit them. Their society is a delight and an instruction and a heavenward influence, carrying me upward, as on eagle’s wings. The society of their children is suggestive to me constantly of knowledge and strength, of beauty and grace, of integrity and usefulness, of the pleasures of hope and the anticipations of nobleness which run forward far into the future with swift and eager feet. But I cannot go to Winchendon because, as you well understand, I am a helpless, hopeless, and wretched invalid. The grasshopper is a burden; the shaking of a leaf in my sight is like the assault of an army; the slamming of a door is like a thunder-bolt out of the sky; a change of weather from warm to cold, or the exposure to northern breezes and drifting snows, strikes through me with a deathly chill. My heart is with my friends. My love, my thanks, my anxious devisings, and my prayers are sentinels around their pathway all the time. But my bodily presence is feeble and is not transportable. One

thing I do desire. As the prospect of my preaching again to a church and people, whom I can call my own, fades into the dimness of a deep uncertainty, I long for a little spot of land, five acres or two, near to D., or near to A. (either proximity would fill me with joy), where in the week I could labor enough to cast off the horrible torpor of my frame, and on the Sabbath could preach occasionally, and when I did not preach, could hear the preaching of my own beloved kindred.

"Esquire S. has brought to me Cook's Biology and the *Princeton Review* and the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. For weeks to come, if God shall grant me freedom from pain, so that I can pursue consecutive thinking, I shall feast on metaphysics and the natural sciences and the profound philosophy of religion. There are no themes of study which interest me more truly, though latterly my brain trembles and sinks down overwrought, whenever I attempt to wrestle with these great difficulties. Gladly would I forget my meat and my drink, my exercise and my play, my sleep and my pleasure, if I could give myself painlessly and uninterruptedly to McCosh of Princeton, Porter of Yale, Bowen of Harvard, Flint of Edinburgh, Caird of Glasgow, and Bain of Aberdeen, not to speak of Jevons and Morell and Cousin and Schopenhauer. Oh, glorious hour, when all these marvellous problems shall be opened to the eye in the spiritual world, more bright, more beautiful, more easy of understanding, than the charms of a summer landscape in the radiance of the morning sun! I am very sorry for H.; my warmest sympathy and love wait upon him. Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Taylor was broken off three times, by ill health, from his college life. Nevertheless he persevered with a noble resolution; graduated with honor; became the amanuensis of Dr. Dwight; surpassed his master in theological reasonings; trained one thousand young men for the ministry; has pervaded New England with his thought; will be followed by the praises of tens of thousands in eternity. I trust B. will not strain the bow, nor shoot the arrow beyond a healthful flight."

"DECEMBER 28, 1879.

"*My Beloved A*——, — It has been well-nigh impossible for me to answer your last two very kind letters. I have begun to write a dozen times and have been compelled to desist. My mind has been tossed in tempestuous surges of perplexity, uncertainty, anxiety, doubt, and fear. To determine the future of my short life—my place, my work, my responsibility, my duty—has been more difficult than to choose a profession, a wife, a settlement, a residence, or a system of labor, in any of

the past years. Suppose I live to be eighty, as my father did, or eighty-nine, as Deacon Pinneo did, receiving at the hands of God fifteen or twenty or twenty-five years more of earthly existence, where shall I spend it, and how? Shall I live as I am now living, from hand to mouth, struggling for health and strength, and struggling in vain? Shall I give occasion to a scoffing world and to misjudging Christians to say, 'There goes your loafing, superannuated, useless, and worthless minister'? Shall I push out, before I have any consciousness of restored strength or permanent endurance, and try to preach, and plunge myself once more into the abysses of suffering feebleness? I have been seeking for a regimen which would fit me once more for work in the ministry. With as single an eye and with as eager a desire as ever I cherished in the beginning of my ministry, or in my theological preparations, I have sought to renew my strength for ministerial duties. My enforced idleness has not been from the love of idleness, but purely and only for physical restoration. An overworked brain, intensity of emotion, and nervous prostration, have brought me where I am. I have felt that three things were essential to my recovery,—1, restful quiet of mind; 2, outdoor air; 3, agreeable exercise; and that drugs and medicines could not help me. What shall I do? I hate to be a cumberer of God's earth. I hate to be an idle sluggard in the vineyard of my Lord,—a broken implement, covered with rust and cast aside, when the harvest is wide and the grain is ripe and more sickles are earnestly called for. I hate to be a miserable valetudinarian, listless and contemptible, a burden to my children and a burden to the church. I hate to be cut off from the immeasurable privileges of Sabbath worship and of Christian fellowship in the wonderful religious convocations and religious activities of the day. You cannot imagine the greatness of my affliction. God grant you never may know it by experience."

In the summer of 1880, through the kindness of his people, he spent three weeks with his wife and daughter in the company of his beloved brother, Rev. Davis Foster, at Harwichport, Mass. This was his last experience by the sea. He occupied those happy days, as was his delight, in fishing and in watching the ocean. Every day he was accustomed to walk upon the beach, and once or twice, by great effort, he went out with friends after blue-fish.

Immediately after this vacation the American Board met in Lowell, and though Dr. Foster was unable to attend any of the meetings,—a deprivation which was a great affliction,—yet he keenly enjoyed entertaining at his house a large number of old friends, kindred, and others, who came to be present at the services. Though there were but a few days left him upon earth, yet his interest in everything that had occupied his thought in active life was as intense as ever.

From letters written the same fall we make the following extracts :—

“NOVEMBER 9, 1880.

“Some think that the modern ministry goes much beyond the last generation; some think otherwise. I incline to this opinion, viz. that every century has its own qualities of character, marks of power, strains of eloquence, and it is given to only one in about ten thousand of each age, to make an impression on the public mind which is deep and lasting.

“I respond most heartily to your patriotic sentiment in favor of Garfield. We have now secured, in my judgment, the most perfect president, the most complete and rounded character, we have ever had in the chief-magistrate’s chair. It is a great thing for a man to stand higher than Washington or Lincoln. Equalling them in high-toned courage; in simplicity and integrity and truthfulness; in self-forgetful devotion to country; in his knowledge of men; in his knowledge of political principles; in his earnest, intelligent trust in God; he surpasses them both, in scholarship, in genius, and in eloquence. I think him the first intellect of America, as Gladstone is the first of England; as Guizot was of France; as John Winthrop was of Massachusetts Bay. The war has done for us one marvellous thing: it has given us a succession of superb, unequalled presidents,—Lincoln, Garfield, Grant, Hayes; we have had no others like them during the century. Contrast them with Buchanan, Pierce, Johnson, Tyler. The chasm between them is wider and deeper than the cataract of Niagara, or the cañon of the Colorado. I have been reading the twelfth and last volume of J. Q. Adams’s life. His character is more faulty than I supposed. He is unjustly and even fiercely severe upon almost every public man of his time. With the noblest ethical wisdom and the highest political eloquence, he combines some of the strangest and meanest bursts of personal bitter vituperation that I ever read. It would be just as impossible, it seems to me, for Garfield to hold such a

pen and write such philippics, as for St. Paul to write Paine's *Age of Reason*. Thank God for some improvement in our political history!

"I have been unrolling my bundle of papers on 'Woman's Character and Mission.' I have reviewed a large number of excerpts and essays on her rights and her wrongs; her work in the home, in literature, in civil government, in great reforms; in spreading abroad benevolence, purity, simplicity, tenderness, moral courage, intellectuality, religious consecration,—silently, like the dews of night; unseen, like the electricity of the telegraphic wire; refreshing, like the flow of the meadow-brook in the grass; diffusive, like the vapors of the ocean; powerful, like the wind, or the tide, or the cloud, or the river, or the sunshine. Give me time, give me health, give me brains (I have already the enthusiasm), and I would write a volume on Woman's sphere and destiny and unconscious influence, which would wake up the sleepers. 'Subjection of woman to man,' as Mill describes it? No; subjection of both man and woman to truth and love, and the great law of holy service. 'Reform against nature,' as Bushnell has it? No; reform with nature, with Scripture, with science, with the consenting voice of all the good, with Christ the Sacrifice as brother and friend, with the Holy Spirit the Sanctifier, as helper, with a Father omnipotent, as ever-present guardian."

"NOVEMBER 17, 1880.

"A fifth article is by Edward Everett Hale, of Boston, on the 'Insincerity of the Pulpit.' It is ingenious and acute, appealing to common prejudices, and powerful in its use of the language and the prepossession of the people. But it is all a sophism, built on false premises. The first half of his paper attempts to show that the preacher should not refer to skeptical doubts in his sermons. He should not give evidences nor reasons nor arguments. The pulpit is not the place for that sort of writing. Let him state what he thinks, what he believes, what he knows, plain propositions of ethics, of morals, of duty, of experience, and let disputed points alone. Then Mr. Hale flops. The last half of his paper is a sneer at the orthodox pulpit; because, as he asserts, it is insincere; it proclaims what it does not know or believe; it states, from the guarded desk, what it would not dare to state in the parlor to a man of thought and science; it does not give evidences nor reasons nor arguments. Now I affirm most unqualifiedly and most earnestly that Mr. Hale is mistaken. The evangelical pulpit of this republic has been most remarkably characterized by its

great argumentative power. More than in any other country, it has dwelt on Christian evidences, scientific facts, historic deductions, metaphysical arguments, profound reasonings. It has not neglected virtues and morals and the multiform duties of society. It has mingled practice with doctrine, making the personal application all the way. It has built its appeals on the eternal verities of nature, of science, of history, of consciousness, of the revelation, and has not been simply hortatory and sensational. I appeal to the names which are illustrious in the annals of the American pulpit. In the Presbyterian church, Davies, Alexander, Barnes, H. B. Smith, Hodge, Patten, Wm. Adams, McCosh, Griffin, Shedd, Richardson. In the Dutch Reformed Church, Bethune, Schaff, Harbaugh, Hartranft, Taylor Lewis. In the Baptist church, Wayland, Williams, Hackett, Robinson, Sears. In the Methodist church, Olin, Durbin, Simpson, Jaynes. In the Congregational church, Edwards, Emmons, Dwight, Lyman Beecher, N. Taylor, Park, President Hopkins, R. S. Storrs, Jeremiah Day, President Woolsey, President Appleton, President Marsh, President Bartlett, President Nott. Where can you begin to find among those of unevangelical faith such a company of reasoners, or such a combined and accumulated amount of strong, unanswerable argument and evidence? Nowhere, nowhere; it does not exist."

"I have been reading the sermons of Phillips Brooks. I am strongly impressed by them. Some compare him to Robertson. I think he goes far beyond Robertson in natural expositions of scripture and evangelical tone of doctrine. He is to be ranked in the order of high, profound, reverent thinkers, like John Hall, William M. Taylor, Austin Phelps, Jacob Manning, Dr. Duryea. He has great intensity, concentration of argument, overwhelming pathos, outbursts of tenderness and devotion."

"MAY 26, 1881.

"*My Dear N*——, — Your father and mother have been at work all the forenoon sowing blossoming seeds, transplanting plants from pots and flowers from borders, striking out two circles of eschscholtzias and portulacas, making a semi-square of geraniums, forming a wall of beauty around three fourths of the circle, placing a lantana and a blue-bell in the centres of the circles. Alas, how soon flowers wither, and leaves fall, and hopes of youth and manhood decay! He builds too low who builds beneath the skies. Neither flowers nor fruits, nor gold nor gems, nor praises nor honors, nor luxuries nor comforts, can fill the hungry soul. The pear blossoms are gone, and the

young pears are pushing ahead their growth, like lions for their prey, or rather like lambs, eager to be eaten. O for the three dear Dayton children, who were here last summer, lovers of pears, and beloved by the owners of pears; if they were present, how gladly would I train the luscious and the succulent fruit for their pleasure and their health! The apples are giving promise of a medium harvest. One bushel of Baldwins, four bushels of Greenings, two bushels of Astrachans, I think, will be gathered. If I had eight or nine or twelve children to sit around my hearth-stone in the winter, and eat apples and crack nuts and tell stories and pinch their father's ears, I should have a much deeper complacency in my trees and wish their number increased.

"This is my birthday, and many grateful thoughts and some mournful reminiscences come crowding into the telescope of my reflections, and, like the stars, they shine more vividly in the telescope than to the natural eye. I recall my mother, blessed, faithful, indefatigable, full of trust, of hope, of prayers, ever multiplying her toils for her children. If she had lived she would be now ninety-five years old. Twenty-seven years has she been in heaven, while I have been struggling on, in toils without number or rest, in despondencies without mitigation or change. It will be a joyful hour if I ever meet her in a land where there are no clouds nor storms nor night nor sea. My memories of Henniker are very dear, where I first went in the sweet month of June, flowers in my eye and hopes in my soul. One such friendship as that of Mr. and Mrs. C. is enough to pay for a pastorate of six years, with all its weariness and painfulness, its burdensome responsibilities and great labors. There A. and E. were born, and first filled the hearts of their father and mother with an undying thankfulness. Our hearts go back to Pelham, and there two angels seem to be walking by our side,—they are angels now, but we called them then Charles and Edward. My memories of West Springfield are very dear. The friends there surrounded me with sustaining strength, with exhilarating hopes, with spiritual delights, for which gold could be no exchange. My memories of Lowell are very dear; but I will not enter upon that theme; it is inexhaustible."

"JUNE 7, 1881.

"We are living in an age of false, dangerous, treacherous Liberalism. The drift is tremendous towards all forms of heterodoxy, irreligion, and bold, subtle, plausible theories of infidelity. It is seen in secular papers and in religious papers.

It is seen in controversies now going on, about Robertson Smith of Edinburgh. There is no anchor of faith, and the wind drives. There is no accepted standard of truth, and the vane turns. In politics, in business, in schools, in art, in literature, in authorship, there are established principles; there are changeless and enduring laws of truth and right; and woe to the adventurous speculator who ignores them! I believe that God has given a changeless and an eternal law in religion, more, far more, than in any other department of thought or action. That law is in the Bible; I hope that you and I will stand by it till we die.

"I have read and re-read portions of Dr. Hodge's Theology. They are instructive and weighty and eloquent and true, but rather too scientific for my present state of mind, seeking for practical improvement, rather than for evidence to satisfy doubt. You ask for some information about Tom Corwin. He was the 'Wagon-boy' of Ohio, as far-famed as Henry Clay, the 'Mill-boy of the Virginia Slashes'; or as N. P. Banks, the 'Bobbin-boy' of Waltham; or as James A. Garfield, the 'Towpath-boy' of the Reserve. Mr. Corwin had an intuitive discernment and power of eloquence, as much as Patrick Henry or John B. Gough or Dwight L. Moody, and where that native genius is found, it goes beyond all scholarship and art. Tom Corwin made a speech in Congress on the Mexican War, which will live in the annals of eloquence as long as any speech of Webster or Choate. I would take a journey of a hundred miles, or fast two days in the week, or go without a new suit of clothes, to hear such eloquence. We have a great deal of public speaking which is feeble, but when you listen to such a man as Corwin on a serious and weighty theme, it is a sublime and incomprehensible power, like the crash of thunders or the music of the sea.

"Please tell Mr. Warren, when you see him, that I should be glad to hear DeWitt Clark and William Warren and Addison Foster sing 'Johnny Schmoker' once more.* I think it would cheer my disconsolate heart. I should like also to attend a Sabbath day's crowded services of three sermons, — one by Mr. Warren, one by Mr. Clark, one by my son; the more protracted these discourses, the better. I should be lifted up by them above earthly cares, and should go in the strength of them the rest of my short life. I have been reviewing some books of biography to refresh my memory of important

* Referring to happy vacation days by the sea-shore when the three were students.

events and to deepen my spiritual convictions. I have looked over the lives of Chas. Hodge, Henry B. Smith, J. Addison Alexander, Bela B. Edwards, C. G. Finney (five theological professors); of John Todd, Edward N. Kirk, Henry Martyn, John Newton, Thomas Scott (five holy men of the present century and the past); of Mary Lyon, Harriet Newell, Henrietta Hamlin, Mary Somerville, Maria Leycester Hare (five women whose martyr-like consecration to duty has quickened the spiritual life of the church of Christendom). I do not mean that I have re-read carefully the whole, but I have renewed the sacred impressions, the delightful relish, the upward aspiration and resolve. These books are to me beyond price. They furnish a feast, both for intellect and soul, for the joy of this life and for the praises of heaven. When I am longing for mental enlargement, for spiritual elevation, for more of a Christ-like benevolence, and for a higher power of evangelizing influence, these books become to me a divine vehicle of thought, a powerful means of grace."

"LOWELL, June 20, 1881.

"*My Dear N*——, — I have written, since my birthday, to A., to S., to D. I have begun to reconstruct five or six sermons. But my pen is not equal to the effort. My head becomes a spinning-top, screwing out dismal sounds and dismal pains. I am like the aëronaut, who rose in a balloon last week from Boston. He rose successfully, but the wind soon started him seaward, and he was compelled swiftly and meekly to take a more lowly place. Rev. Dr. B. once told me I was off on the tops of the mountains all the way from the beginning of a sermon or a speech to the end, that I needed to come down and walk in the valleys more. I guess my friends will now admit that I walk in the valleys sufficiently.

"We are full of anxiety, in these outlying territories of the Republic, about the relations of Garfield to Conkling, about the backward steps of the Lowell aldermen in the temperance cause, about the cold which blights the fruit-trees and the corn, about the Revised Version, if one half or two thirds of its changes prove to be unnecessary, etc. etc. It seems, at this present writing, as if Conkling would split the Republican party into two unequal parts, irreconcilable and unforgiving, thus recklessly throwing the next administration into the hands of the Democrats. Our city government has voted for license; the flood-gates are opened; an inundation worse than that of the Wabash and Miami valleys is at hand. Drunkards go reeling along River Street. Our washer-woman says her husband

brought home his store-bill the other day. It was, for lager, \$28 (!); for food, \$2 (!). So the world goes, and the appetites of the multitude bind them in galling and debasing chains. I think it very probable that we shall have controversy and religious schism on the subject of the New Testament. Mr. Talmage thinks the New Version is an impertinence; Mr. Potter thinks it is a strong support of Rationalism; Mr. Schermerhorn thinks it is a Unitarian Bible; the Universalists claim it as their friend. It will become the fountain, I fear, of sarcasm, cavil, angry debate, and theological hatred. God can bring marvelous blessings out of apparent evil. Amid all agitations, collisions, infidelities, mistakes of the good, antipathies of the wicked, the Bible will endure and will conquer."

The following is to a brother who had at the time two sons in college, in whose welfare Dr. Foster took the keenest interest. The young men referred to were then on a vacation. It shows that his anxiety for his country had not a whit diminished.

"AUGUST, 1881.

"*Dear Brother*, — I wish I could be with the boys camping out on the coasts of Maine, shooting partridges in the forest, hooking big cod on the briny wave, breathing the balsamic airs of stately pines, only I am afraid of woodchucks and wood-lice, snakes and red ants, hard boards (to sleep on) and rain-storms, black flies and mosquitoes. I think they will have a good time. I hope they will lay in lots of health, wisdom, courage, cheerfulness, and high aims.

"The shot that hit Garfield may be the political death of Conkling, — I hope it will. But it is the most alarming and atrocious event of the century. If an assassin may choose our ruler, we are near the end of Republicanism. If any scalawag from the slums of the city, or any born devil from dens of murderers, or any tool of vile political factions, may put a man in the Presidential chair, we are lost. Better abolish the Vice-Presidency; better remand a new election to the people; better call a convention of Governors of States; better give the choice at once to the House of Representatives, — than this fearful mal-adjustment of the Vice-Presidency."

The first two of the following extracts are to his daughter, the last to his son.

"LOWELL, July 8, 1881.

"*My Dear N*—, — We are greatly anxious to have you come home. We love you very dearly, and we are very lonely. It is like living in Nova Zembla, without sun, or fire, or April showers, or may-flowers, or republican government, or Christian institutions, or sugar for our tea, or butter for our pears. Please come home as soon as you can. Since President Garfield was shot, and, as we fear, mortally wounded, republics seem a folly, the world a Pandemonium, and life and every blessing a transient possession to be ruthlessly destroyed by any villanous assassin. Our politics are in a deplorable condition, when the rage of faction can stir up such blind and fiend-like malignity. If God has mercy in store for our nation, and if prayers can save an invaluable life, Garfield will live. Ten thousand thousand wrestling supplications, in closets and families and Christian assemblies, are offered for him daily. If Garfield dies, I know not what commotions, hatreds, violences, and revolutions are before us. It is the last time that an assassin will be permitted to choose the chief magistrate of the nation."

"*My Dear A*—, — How are you edified by the swift succession of learned and ecclesiastical councils,—Schools of Philosophy at Concord, Schools of Science in Boston, Schools of Episcopalianism at Newton, Schools of Unitarianism at Saratoga, etc. etc.? Dr. Bellows thinks theology will soon be formed and demonstrated only by reason and common-sense. There was considerable reason and common-sense in Athens, in Rome, among the Encyclopedists of France, and the Neologists of Germany, and the Transcendentalists of America, but when did they produce a Bible, or a divine plan of redemption, or a life like that of Christ, or a republic like the United States, or an accomplished reform like that of Luther, or an incontrovertible and consistent system of doctrine like that of Edwards? Rev. Mr. C. thinks that the 'sweet graces of the cradle and the life-juices of tender love' were absent from Puritanism. He evidently is infantile in his education. He has not read the beautiful and pathetic story of Winthrop and his wife Margaret, of Bradford and Mrs. Southworth, of Johnson and the Lady Arabella, of Peregrine White, and several others."

During these years the relation between him and his people was one of sincere interest and love. He could not be present at their meetings, but they understood the feebleness that

necessitated his absence, and were certain of his sympathy and prayers. His anxieties in their behalf are indicated in a letter in which he urges a parishioner to accept the office of superintendent of the Sabbath-school.

"My Dear Sir,—Permit me to express a strong desire that you should accept the superintendency of the Sabbath-school. Your power of logical thought and of Bible interpretation, your skill in the practical application of truth, your singular aptness to teach, fit you, as few are fitted, for this work. I know the burden of responsibility, I know the crowd of work that presses upon you in your profession. If you feel that you can carry the added load, God's grace, I believe, will give you added strength. The church and the congregation are in full sympathy with you. You will be a leader of souls through the gates of salvation and of song. As pastor *emeritus*, as pastor *moriturus*, I trust not as a forgetful pastor, I watch from my retirement the progress of affairs, feeling as intense a longing as ever in my life for John-street prosperity and John-street unity, and I have seen no signs of the times more auspicious than this movement.

"Very affectionately yours."

Another letter written about the same time shows how sincerely, even in the enforced retirement of his feebleness, he was interested in the welfare of his people, how deeply he sympathized with them in their troubles, and how greatly he desired to do them good. This letter was addressed to one who had grown up from childhood under his eye, and who for years had been confined at home in helplessness and pain.

"My Dear Miss —, — May I tell you that my most anxious sympathies have been awakened on your behalf? All the members of my parish have been dear to me. All the lambs of my flock have been carried in the arms of my prayers to Christ. Still, when one has suffered as you have suffered, I cannot repress my tears. When one of the dear youth for whom I have so often planned and studied, is laid aside in loneliness, in daily and nightly pain, in mental depression, I am deeply moved by emotions of sorrow. Miss — called last night and spoke of your case with great sensibility and affectionateness. I spend the hours of this beautiful Sabbath morning in thoughts of you and in prayer for you. While the

assembly of God's people are worshipping in His house, I implore the infinite tenderness and grace of Christ and His divine support for you. I send you a card which suggests some consolations for one who is prostrate in weakness and in distress.

"Life is full of mysteries, but oh, my dear friend, lean on the bosom of Jesus, pour out your prayer into His ear, and mysteries and sorrow and anguish shall flee away as the clouds are driven by the rising sun. God's mercies and His most tender regard are shown in pain as well as in comfort, in losses as well as in the possession of dearest objects. Distresses teach us our dependence. Afflictions lead us to the Cross.

"The farmer cuts down the forest and seems to have made a wide devastation of leafy and flowery beauty. So earthly disappointments lay waste our hopes, our strength, our life. But the farmer's field shall soon be cleared of stumps and logs and brush and rubbish, and a most beautiful harvest of grain shall be reaped. So our wasted life, hacked, mutilated, deformed, destroyed by the feller's axe, by sickness, by sorrow, and by death, shall blossom again with inimitable and everlasting beauty in the garden of the Lord above. You are the Saviour's care; you have been redeemed by His blood; your sufferings enlist His loving compassion. He is ready to forgive your sins. He will wash away the stains of guilt and erase the handwriting of ordinances. He loves you as much as He loved Lazarus when He raised him from the grave, or Peter when He looked upon him with that expression of utmost tenderness, or Mary when she sat at His feet and chose the heavenly treasure. He sends you pains, that he may break your heart in penitence and holy trust. He points to His own bleeding wounds, that He may fill your longing soul to the very brim with patience and submission, with love, joy, and peace, with renunciation of earth and self, with antepasts of heaven.

"With affectionate sympathy, with importunate prayer, I leave you in the hands of that divine Friend who has given you tokens of His love beyond all earthly love and earthly care.

"Your true friend and former pastor."

A word should be said of the relations of Dr. Foster to Mr. Seabury. For more than three years Mr. Seabury was associate pastor with him, and for four years afterwards, while Dr. Foster dwelt among the people, took all the responsibilities of the pastorate. Not every ex-pastor, and much less a senior pastor, has the grace given him to make the position of

his younger brother in the ministry easier. It is hard for one who has been in the habit of standing at the head and directing affairs, to yield precedence to another, and to see his ways set aside for others. Human nature in the ministry, no less than in other men, tempts one to jealousies and disparagements. And in fairness it should be added that not every successor of a previous minister has the grace given him to listen with equanimity to the praises of one who has gone before him, or always remembers to treat the resident ex-pastor with the respectful consideration which such a man ordinarily deserves. Dr. Foster was a model ex-pastor. Never by word or deed did he throw a hindrance in the way of his successor's efforts; never even in his family did he criticise his successor's work or methods. On the contrary, he always spoke of him most lovingly and appreciatively, and was constantly seeking to strengthen his hands among his people. He was absolutely free from jealousy of Mr. Seabury's successes; on the other hand, he was made happy by them. This was partly due to the fact that he had not an atom of self-seeking in his nature; partly to his intense dislike of that petty spirit of criticism and gossip which loves to pick flaws in others; partly to his devotion to John-street Church, which led him to rejoice in anything that advanced its interests; partly and most emphatically to his warm admiration and personal love for Mr. Seabury, as a man, a Christian, and a minister. More than once did Dr. Foster in his family express his affection for Mr. Seabury, as his son in the faith, and say that there were three young ministers in whom he felt a special interest, and for whom he desired to do anything in his power for their good, — his own son, Rev. C. D. Barrows, then pastor of the Kirk-street Church, Lowell, and Mr. Seabury.

The following kind and appreciative words from Mr. Seabury, written in review of this period of Dr. Foster's life, corroborate the statements made above.

"It is a delightful retrospect, my associate pastorate with that broad-souled man. I wish I could trace with a diamond point my sense of gratitude for his cordial, fraternal, cheering,

stimulating welcome when I began my labors. He feared that by some possibility he might place in my way an obstacle ever so small. He objected to consider the new relation as anything but an *associate* pastorate. In his mind the term colleague was not adequate to express the equality of our intimate relationship. His bearing towards his co-laborer was the same from first to last,—kind, considerate, helpful. I seldom received from him a criticism of any measure I presented to him. On many an occasion when I had finished preaching and turned around with a sinking heart, he was there to greet me with a moistened cheek, an eager grasp of the hand, a kind word of cheer. Touching the order and methods of church-work, he uniformly endorsed every suggestion I had to make. He gave me ‘a large liberty,’ indeed. Even in those matters involving a departure from the established order of things, he felt that the new was the better way. This was oftentimes disappointing to me, but I saw in it the great soul that prompted his liberal treatment, and suggested to his mind that affecting but unsuitable and trying quotation, ‘You must increase, but I must decrease.’ When, as he was wont to do, he called me ‘Timothy,’ I found a reciprocal title in that which may be appropriately given him because of the intensity and warmth of his nature—‘Paul.’ His charity and sympathy were essentially Pauline. Such phrases as ‘thinketh no evil,’ ‘envieth not,’ ‘rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth,’ are applicable to this expounder of that thrilling chapter, as it was to the writer of it. Although these were qualities peculiar to his whole life, they were especially characteristic of him during his later and riper years. He covered the frailties of others with the mantle of his charity. But he preached as a dying man to dying men. When he placed himself side by side with his fellow-sinners, it was in the spirit of the words, ‘Of whom I am chief.’ The last sermon he ever preached was from the burning words of Ezekiel, ‘Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die?’ In such a theme his heart found scope for its unquenchable desire. It was a sermon of much weeping. There were tears in his voice as truly as in his eyes. Dr. Foster was one whose fountain of tears lay near the surface. His emotions came from his yearning heart. At the close of that last sermon he fell back into his chair, almost prostrate from his excessive nervous effort. But during the delivery of the discourse he was as full of his wonted earnestness of manner as ever. When he came down from the platform, it was not with the tottering step of age or feebleness, but the trembling reaction of overwork and exhaustion. Then

followed spasmodic tortures of the brain, and sleepless nights. Even after the physical apparatus began to grow weak, and protracted mental labor unendurable, thought was as fresh and vigorous as ever, argument as close and conclusive, appeal as urgent and persuasive. It was the body, not the mind, that gave way. The scabbard was thin and fragile; the keen edge of the sword was penetrating its toil-worn surface. In his work his physical powers became a prey to his feelings. His sympathies were of an extraordinary depth. He took upon his own soul every subject of sorrow and trial, and bore it as his own. Few knew how deeply he felt the disappointment of his enforced absence from church, after he had ceased to preach. His heart was with his people to the last. He knew them better than they supposed. He kept himself constantly informed of the changes in their households. He understood, by intuition, as it were, their religious condition. His wonderful perception of men grew more discriminating as the years passed. With it grew that charity which covers a multitude of sins. He loved to meet his people in his own home, but his absorbing labors for the pulpit, and his impaired health, to a large degree proscribed his pastoral labors. If he failed to see his people in their homes as often as they wished, he more than made it up in the pulpit. Then he told us more of our inner life than we imagined he knew. So highly was he esteemed by all classes, that he was often sought for in the emergency of approaching death by those, especially, who were unprepared to die.

"It was affecting to see how his broad catholicity of spirit deepened during the latter years of his ministry. His pen was still active upon some subject connected with reform, or missions, or freedom. When he ceased to preach on these themes, he wrote on them. A year or so before his death, he was engaged in writing a series of biographical sketches, entitled 'The Heroes of Liberty.' He was at heart a genuine reformer and missionary. He loved freedom as he loved his home and his church. All his productions glowed with a fire and pathos it is hard to conceive possible during the years of his increasing decline.

"Did any one ever labor with such unsparing self-abnegation? This was equally true of him during the active years of this associate pastorate. Whatever he put his hands to was done with that careful attention to thorough structure and delicate analysis and finish, by which the earlier years of his ministry were noted. Although endowed with such superior pulpit talent, no one could toil more zealously to make his talent

potent and persuasive. Even after a sermon was completed, he would remodel, polish, even burnish, portions which to his discriminating eye could bear it. Then every period was well rounded, every sentence stood out, — a thing of force, pungency, and conviction, divested of all angles and roughnesses. He feathered his arrow; it was certainly well sharpened and accurately aimed. He told me once that during the latter portion of his ministry he felt the importance of illuminating his discourses with more illustration. This he was easily able to do, drawing from that large mass of anecdote and fact, the accumulation of years of research. His interest in public events was keen and quick to the last. From the columns of the secular and religious papers he had gathered a rich treasury of current knowledge, which he well knew how to use.

“If there is one word which expresses more clearly than any other the leading characteristic of Dr. Foster’s life, it is *unction*. In the pulpit this quality prevailed to a wonderful degree, — a breathing, deep-felt intensity, founded on a solid, intellectual basis. His extempore addresses in the lecture-room swept us along in the current of his marvelously rapid and moving eloquence. His unction in prayer was proverbial. It grew deeper and more mellow as the consciousness of his nervous debility increased, and he knew that the end could not be afar off. He bore on his heart and lips the needs of all his hearers. He gathered into one the wants of all classes and ages; then made them more real to ourselves, by giving them the outlines of his sensitive, analytic, and comprehensive mind, pouring over all the wealth of his description and the importunity of his soul. At funeral services his prayers were especially felicitous and beautiful. They brought relief and solace. Whether in the pulpit or out of it, in his study or at the house of mourning, our beloved brother rises out of the past an impassioned figure, — an intense, a burning desire. He had profound emotions, balanced by the strongest intellectual forces. Every faculty of his mental and spiritual being was finely and delicately strung, — a harp of a thousand strings. All his talents were of a high order, and he held them in full measure; nothing was ordinary, either in quality or compass. It was, in fact, the sustained vigor of his mental forces, his capacity for work, which caused wonder. Every power was also highly cultivated.

“Dr. Foster possessed a remarkable harmony of qualities. In him were realized the strength and energy of manhood’s ripest attainments, and the gentleness of a refined nature. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, once said of Sir Thomas Fair-

fax, that which is appropriate to our honored and revered brother, —

‘Both sexes’ virtues were in him combined;
He had the firmness of the manliest mind,
And all the tenderness of womankind.
He never knew what envy was, nor hate;
His soul was filled with worth and honesty,
And with another thing, quite out of date,
Called modesty.’

“He always suffered from a sense of his own unworthiness. While he preached to others a saving gospel, he feared that he might come short of the glory of God. But when the hour of dissolution approached, he looked death in the face with a calm, peaceful, and expectant hope. He was ready. The hour he feared might be one of terrors, was one of rest. It was my privilege to kneel by his bedside often during those final hours. His faith was strong and comforting. The Saviour he had preached so faithfully led him by the hand through the valley of the shadow of death; he could fear no evil.”

In these long days of feebleness, Dr. Foster received frequent visits from two greatly loved and honored physicians, — Dr. Daniel Holt, a parishioner who did not long survive him, and Dr. F. A. Warner. Dr. Holt was a man of much originality of mind, and having a decided theological bent, delighted

“In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate.”

In his later years he came rather as a friend than a practitioner, his age and ill health forbidding his assuming medical responsibility. Dr. Warner made his visits as a practising physician, but his hearty sympathy and religious experiences made him welcomed as a friend no less, and whenever his presence was announced Dr. Foster’s eye would brighten. Indeed, Dr. Foster, like most ministers, was always happy in his relations to physicians. The medical profession treats the ministry with great kindness, and there are few ministers who do not appreciate this fact, and recognize in the physician a brother who imitates Christ in healing the sick, as much as the minister follows Christ in caring for the soul.

But the fell disease, which it was afterwards discovered must for several years have been undermining his strength and destroying a vital organ, now made rapid progress. Dr. Foster had long been troubled with difficulty of the liver. That organ had ever been inactive and a source of derangement to all the functions of his body. It now proved to be seriously diseased, and began to manifest its disorder by sharp pains, and by inducing great lassitude. Throughout the winter of 1881-2, Dr. Foster felt unusually feeble, sustaining himself, however, in his ordinary habits with much cheerfulness. During the month of February his pain and weakness increased, and he became unable to sit up long at a time. Dreading to give up to his illness, he would dress in the course of the day and lie upon the sofa by the hour together. The last day that he was able to do this, he was reading Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, the gift of a valued friend, and when he laid it down he left it open, as if expecting soon to take it up again. That afternoon a friend called, and he talked with her pleasantly of Macaulay. He affirmed a poem in the volume, written by Macaulay on his retirement from parliamentary life, to be better than any one of his famous lays. He compared Macaulay with other essayists, and expressed a determination to read his writings more, as his own health improved. He also talked about Mr. Blaine's eulogy of President Garfield, criticising some of Mr. Blaine's remarks regarding the late President's religious creed, and expressing with great emphasis his own faith in the doctrines of Christianity. He referred to his own habit of preserving newspaper clippings as one that had been of great value, and was of present comfort to him; and spoke of the ease with which he could peruse them compared with the difficulty of taking up any heavy connected reading. He expressed great sympathy for friends suffering from ill health, making no reference to the intense pains he was then enduring himself. The day following, March 7, he took his bed for the last time. "I remember when I took my bed," he afterwards said, "for it was the anniversary of Webster's great Hayne debate." Little by

little, as he lay upon his bed, he wasted away. He suffered constantly, and much of the time severely; could not turn upon his right side at all, and was greatly dependent upon the assiduous attentions of his wife and daughter. From the beginning he was most patient and uncomplaining, his pains being known only by the compression of his lips and an occasional groan, which he could only partially suppress. Throughout his illness his mind was perfectly clear, and he loved to converse on the topics that had interested him through life. He talked with his brother Davis and sister Sarah, who watched at his bedside, of the latest phases of politics, of the anti-Chinese bill, and of the Andover discussion, and desired to have the points made by the Faculty read to him. At his request, his wife gave him an account of Longfellow's funeral, and at another time there was read to him Bryant's *Thanatopsis*. After listening to it, he observed that there was not a word in it about the future life, except the word "trust," and expressed regret that Bryant had not written another poem of equal eloquence and power on the immortality of the soul. "To-morrow," he added, "I wish you would read to me Wordsworth's *Ode to Immortality* and Longfellow's *Voices of the Night*." A few days subsequently, he called his daughter to his side and asked for a reading of the former poem. She began the *Ode to Immortality*, but presently he complained of weariness. "The poem requires close thinking, and I am not able to follow it," he said.

But above all things else his thoughts were most interested in heaven and divine things. He took great joy in hearing the Bible read and in listening to prayer. When his beloved brothers in the ministry, Dr. Street and Mr. Seabury, called upon him and prayed with him, the influence of their visit seemed to abide with him and comfort him for hours afterwards. "The thought of Christ," said he to his physician, "soothes me more than anything else."

During his sickness his people showed him the greatest kindness, which he warmly appreciated. The deacons made up a purse and sent it to him, and subsequently the people gener-

ally combined in presenting him a handsome sum to meet his needs. Other friends from near and far hastened to express their sympathy. For all this he was deeply grateful. The last words he ever committed to paper, except a letter to his sister, were dictated by him in acknowledgment of the gifts of John-street people. They were these:—

“MARCH 23.

“*Dear Friends*,—I wish to return my sincere and heartfelt thanks for your most generous gift. My strength is utter weakness, and I cannot say all I would. My prayer is that God may reward you. On the border-land between earth and heaven, I look back with profound thanksgivings to God for the privileges of this pastorate. I have loved this people with a fervent love. I hope to meet them in heaven. With deep affection and esteem,

E. B. F.”

Among many delicate attentions shown to him, bouquets of choice flowers were frequently sent in to him. In these he took great delight, examining them particularly, and finding in them, as he always had in every part of creation, fresh evidence of the love of his Heavenly Father. His life-long interest in nature, and his pleasure at the approach of spring, were further exemplified by a request he often made, when the music of the birds in early morning attracted his notice. “Please open the windows,” he would say, “that I may hear the birds sing.” His daughter had thoughtfully written to friends in all parts of the country, informing them that her father was probably in his last illness. From these friends letters came back, expressive of warmest interest and sympathy. These were read to him, and they comforted him greatly. He never failed even in his paroxysms of pain to be sensible of the kindness of others, and to thank them with that gentle politeness which had always characterized him. To the friends who came in to move him upon his bed; to those who had watched with him; to those who brought him some pleasant remembrance; to his brother and sister standing by his bedside; to his wife and daughter, anticipating his every wish,—he would say, “I thank you,” with such feeling that it seldom failed to bring tears to every eye.

During his sickness his son was able to come on from Jersey City twice to visit him, and it was quite characteristic of his unselfish and thoughtful disposition, that he charged his family, just before his son left, "You must not urge A. to stay longer than he thinks best. He will stay as long as he can, but his cares are many, and he can give me only a day or two at most." At the second visit the battle was almost won. The voice of the sufferer was well-nigh gone, and could be heard but in a whisper. The eyes were deeply set and already dim. The labored breath slowly came and slowly went. The hand, pale and emaciated, lay on the sheet with scarcely strength to move. But as the son came in the eye lighted up, a whispered welcome was heard, the feeble hand gave a glad pressure. Once more the son kneeled by his father's side and prayed, closing with a thanksgiving that the gates of heaven were open, and that all who accepted the cleansing of Jesus' blood might enter in and be with Christ forever. As the prayer ended, the father exclaimed in a whisper, "Oh, blessed, blessed!" Little was said as the hours went by, except that now and then some one of the family would make some comforting remark, or repeat some passage of Scripture. At one time the dying man, evidently desirous of expressing once more his gratitude for the kindnesses of his family during his sickness, and, as it seemed to them, for the services of a lifetime, casting his eyes on each one as he said it, whispered, "I thank you," "I thank you," "I thank you." "Father," said the son, a little later, "is the Saviour precious?" "Infinitely," was the reply, uttered with an emphasis not lessened by the effort with which the whisper was made audible. "And heaven near?" "Yes," was the response, uttered in such a way that it seemed like a voice that dropped from the skies. In years past Dr. Foster's hope of salvation had at times been strangely clouded. Under the influence of disease, sometimes his faith grew weak, and he was almost in despair. He loved his family, his books, the beauties of nature, and he shrank from the pains of dissolution. But during his last sickness, all fear of death disappeared, and he spoke of it cheerfully, even

said if it were right, he should pray for an instant release. And now in his dying hour God gave him dying peace. His soul was unclouded. He was perfectly happy. With a Saviour infinitely precious and a heaven near, he was glad to go. And yet with these longings the fire of a deep and tender affection for his family, that next to his love to his Saviour had been his controlling passion in life, burned up warmly still, — for his last audible utterance, given expression with the greatest difficulty, was this, “Oh, how I love you all!”

It was at five o'clock in the afternoon of April 11, 1882, that his spirit passed peacefully away. And so he had his wish, which he had expressed in a letter, years before, —

“If I could choose my own time to die, it should be in the spring of the year. The desolation of winter is banished; the singing of birds is in the trees; the bursting buds, the blossoming flowers, the expanding leaves, the green grass on the borders of a thousand running brooks, speak only of summer glories and autumn harvests. All nature is eloquent of new life, new hope, new joy. All things point us forward to the resurrection and the immortal life. All influences raise up the heart in gratitude and trustfulness to God. Let us thank God for the beautiful spring, and let its blessed suggestions elevate and control our minds.”

So let us say. Let us thank God for this beautiful life that on a fair spring-day burst the bud of the earthly and blossomed out into the joy and privilege of the heavenly.

X.—Characteristics.

It is interesting and profitable to search into the peculiarities of one whose character is in any particular worthy of imitation. If Dr. Foster was in many respects a model man and minister, as those who knew him best believe, what were the things distinctive about him? They may, or they may not, be deserving of imitation, — at any rate, they go to make up the man. These characteristics are suggested by what has

gone before, and may be discovered by a careful perusal of the extracts from his letters already given; yet some points deserve further notice and illustration.

Dr. Foster's literary tastes were strongly marked from the first. By birthright he was intensely fond of reading, and he read much, and with a wide range. He indulged very little in fiction, reading only a few of the best novels; but he greatly enjoyed history, poetry, and essays. Of biography he was especially fond. He never wearied of political studies, and orations and addresses had for him a peculiar fascination. He was fond of frequenting the courts of law, to hear the great lawyers plead their cases. He always, when in health, was present at the lectures and political speeches given by prominent men. He was able to gratify his desire but partially in the purchase of books, but he always had access to public libraries, and thus kept a supply of new books constantly before him. His habits of reading were exceedingly thorough. Almost always he made analyses of what he had read, and among his papers are numberless notes on histories, biographies, and other books. He had no system or plan in accordance with which he went through a definite course of reading. He never made reading a task, but luxuriated in it, taking up a book or a theme only so long as it interested him. It was his frequent practice to gather a pile of books around him in nowise related to one another, and then to read a few pages in one and a few in another, opening anywhere, at random, till he became completely absorbed in some one of them. Nor did he generally read with the distinctive idea of gathering material for a special sermon or series of sermons. While he read, indeed, he was always asking himself how this or that could be introduced into a sermon, and what bearing this fact or that had on the great doctrines; but he seldom read as one reads an encyclopædia, picking out certain articles for the sake of information on a certain subject. The rather, he read as a bee flies from flower to flower, gathering sweets wherever they may be found, and going home treasure-laden to stow it away

wherever there may be an appropriate cell. He was fond of commenting on his reading. Not only his sermons, but his letters and his conversations all bore marks of his interest in what he read. The following criticism on Choate illustrates his method.

"Permit me to thank you for the 'Life of Choate.' It is written with admirable simplicity, yet with clear, progressive, accumulative power. I began more than twenty years ago to hoard up, with a miser's greed, every scrap from the newspapers which had a paragraph from Choate's tongue or Choate's pen. On old yellow cuttings, often read, dog-eared, much worn, I have most of his addresses and many of his letters. My heart and my eyes rejoice to find them, with large additions, in beautiful type, on the clear white page, in a form for permanent use. There are no words of any author whom I have ever read, that stir me like those of Rufus Choate. Webster holds me from the beginning to the end of one of his addresses with attention perfectly concentrated, with inward delight deep and unalloyed, with a consciousness of instruction and of mental elevation altogether peculiar; but Choate, while he produces the same impressions of mental wealth and grandeur, reaches more the hidden fountains of emotion. He sends the thrills to my fingers' ends, he draws the tears from my eyes, he chokes me with irrepressible sobs. He is a mystery to me. What is the secret of his imagination and power I cannot explain."

There is value, also, in this list of books to be read, which he drew up for one of his children.

"I give you, on this page, a list of books such as you have asked for:—

I. — HISTORY AND TRAVELS.

P. Smith; Hist. of the World.	Hallam; Middle Ages.
Mommsen; Hist. of Rome.	Guizot; Civilization in Europe.
C. C. Felton; Ancient and Modern Greece.	G. W. Green; Lectures on the Middle Ages.
Milman; Hist. of the First Three Centuries.	D'Aubigné; History of the Reformation.
William Smith; Ancient Biography and Mythology.	Ranke; History of the Popes.
White; Eighteen Christian Centuries.	Robertson; Charles V.
Plutarch's Lives (Clough's Edition).	Motley; History of the Netherlands.
	Prescott; Ferdinand and Isabella.
	Irving; Columbus.

Schiller; Thirty Years' War.
Smiles; Huguenots.
Miss Pardoe; Louis XIV.
Carlyle; French Revolution.
Stevens; Lectures on France.
Walter Scott; Napoleon.
J. S. C. Abbott; Napoleon I.
Knight; Popular History.

Macaulay; England and Essays.
Mackintosh; History of Revolution.
Hallam; Constitutional History.
Goldwin Smith; Three English Statesmen.
Vaughan; English Revolutions.
Creasy; Fifteen Decisive Battles.

II. — HISTORICAL NOVELS.

William Ware; Zenobia, Julian.
Walter Scott; Ivanhoe, Fortunes of Nigel, Talisman.
Bulwer-Lytton; Rienzi, and Last of Barons.
Thackeray; Virginians, Newcomes, and Henry Esmond.

Mrs. Charles; Draytons and Davenants, and Both Sides of the Sea.
Whittier; Life of Mary Powell.
Bungener; Priest and Huguenot.
George Eliot; Romola.
Lockhart; Valerius.
George Croly; Salathiel.

III. — BIOGRAPHY.

John Milton.
John Knox.
Samuel Johnson.
Edmund Burke.
Walter Scott.
Thomas Arnold.
Thomas Chalmers.
Thomas Guthrie.
Hannah More.
Mary Somerville.
Mary Leycester Hare.
Mary L. Duncan.
Mary Lyon.
Charlotte Brontë.
Mary Van Lennep.
Fidelia Fisk.
Isabella Graham.
Samuel Romilly.
Francis Horner.
John Wilson.
Francis Jeffrey.
Robert Southey.
William Wordsworth.
William Arnot.

W. H. Prescott.
Daniel Webster.
Samuel Adams.
Charles Sumner.
W. H. Seward.
Alexander Hamilton.
John Hampden.
John Jay.
John Winthrop.
T. B. Macaulay.
James Mackintosh.
William Wilberforce.
Reginald Heber.
Edward Irving.
Washington Irving.
William Goodell.
E. N. Kirk.
C. G. Finney.
Edward Payson.
Archibald Alexander.
J. Addison Alexander.
Bradford Homer.
John Todd.
John Keble.

Rufus Choate.
DeWitt Clinton.
Patrick Henry.
Hugh Miller.
Fowell Buxton.
George Stephenson.
Edward Forbes.
William Wirt.
William the Silent.
William IV.
Prince Albert.
Oliver Cromwell.
Masson's British Novelists.
Sullivan's Public Characters.
Harvard Memorial Biographies.
Lossing's Pictorial History.
Goodrich's British Eloquence.
Frank Moore's American Eloquence.

IV. — POETRY.

Cowper's Task.
Milton's Paradise Lost.
Thomson's Seasons.
Wordsworth's Excursion.
Bryant.

Longfellow.
Whittier.
Lowell.
Elizabeth Barrett Browning.
Harriet Beecher Stowe.

He was a great student of newspapers, and by their aid knew as much of human nature as many a man who — as he

did not — constantly mingles with men on the street. He was ever clipping choice articles out of the papers and sorting them under separate headings. He had great rolls of these clippings on a wide variety of subjects, and it was a favorite diversion with him to take one of these rolls and read it for hours together. He always had in his pockets little wads of these clippings, a choice poem, a biographical passage, an eloquent paragraph from some political speaker, or a description of some new pear, — and these he was always reading at odd moments. These clippings were of inestimable value to him. They furnished him an inexhaustible store-house of fact and illustration, from which he enriched his sermons and addresses.

He was always a remarkable letter-writer. He gave time and thought to his letters which but few are willing to give. Probably he did this largely because the motives to excellence were within him and not without, — within, in his conscientious desire to do everything in the best possible way, having no reference to the size or quality of the audience to be reached. In these days letter-writing is almost a lost art, but with him the art bore the touch of genius. He was accustomed to copy all important letters which he wrote, and modify their phraseology. Even his letters to his children would often receive this revision. In his very last letter to his son, written just before he took his bed, he apologized because in his feebleness he was obliged to send the first draft. The following excerpts show how he felt regarding letter-writing: —

“I cannot spit letters any more than Robert Hall could sermons. They are always, in my case, the result of severe thinking, almost as much as discourses for the pulpit. It is my infirmity and my sorrow that I cannot do anything extemporaneously, with any comfort or satisfaction to myself. I ought to be able to write a letter, freely and easily; to talk with my parishioners without constraint or galling fetters clanking on the mind; to expound and exhort in a prayer-meeting without labored philosophical investigation. But, alas! I can do nothing easily. If I study, it must be by sessions of more than a dozen hours a day; if I dig, it must be with a giant's force; if I write letters, or conduct funerals, or attend prayer-meetings, it must be by the sweat of the brow.”

"*My Dear N—*, — There are three or four questions which you have asked, which I ought to answer, as I hold it to be obligatory on a good correspondent to answer questions which an anxious friend proposes, as much as to make reply to a query suggested in conversation. Indeed, in writing to friends I usually have kept a memorandum book, in which I put down in briefest words, each question as it occurs; thus preventing my forgetfulness, and thus furnishing a list of topics, which aids me very much in sustaining a free and full correspondence."

In preparing these letters he generally made a brief, beforehand, and then expanded it. A single outline is here given, drawn up by him for a letter to be written to a beloved nephew, then a young collegian. It is a fair sample of his method of studying before writing any letter which he deemed important.

"Letter to H.: 1, Prominence of, Vermont; 2, Sad lessons from M.; 3, Moody's study of the Bible; 4, Todd's estimate of Henry; 5, Prayer for colleges; Dea. R.'s Sabbath-school class, family, and pastor; revival at Princeton in 1856; 6, Exeter, under Buckminster; 7, Sermons, essays, and poetry I used to read: Flavel, Baxter, Doddridge, Scott, Newton, Cecil, Jeremy Taylor; Isaac Taylor, Choate, Kimball, Bayne, Hugh Miller, Taylor Lewis; Young, Cowper, Montgomery, Watts, and Milton."

His habit of sermonizing was peculiar, and not altogether safe to follow, yet undoubtedly the secret of some of his most remarkable productions. He seldom wrote except when in the mood. It was the habit of one minister to take a certain number of sheets of paper, stitch them together, and then write so many hours each day till just those sheets were filled. It is the habit of another to begin two sermons the first of the week, and then to alternate steadily between them, so many hours on one, and then so many hours on the other, till, at the end of the week, both are finished together, like two hot loaves out of the same oven. Dr. Foster was utterly incapable of any method like this. He could not write to order. He must first build up the fires by a course of reading and study. He must wait till the mood was on him.

Sometimes one week, or a second, or even a third, would pass without his writing a word. During this time he would be in much distress of mind, and faithfully endeavor more than once to put thought to paper. But his temperament was such, and his exhausted condition after his intense efforts so great, that he could hardly do otherwise. In consequence he at last accepted the fact, and accommodated his methods of study to his peculiarity. When he found himself unable to write, he would shut himself up in his study with piles of newspaper scraps around him, and a dozen or more books on all sorts of subjects open on the desk before him, while analyses of reading on half-sheets of paper accumulated as the days went by. Thus he rested his weary brain, filled it with a rich variety of facts for argument and illustration, and stimulated it to the liveliest activity in independent thought. Then, when the fit was on him, he was as one inspired,—he would throw aside his books, sit up at his desk, and drive his pen in fury, sometimes sixteen solid hours in a single day; never asking himself whether he had enough or too much for a sermon, or whether he was writing just that and only that which he would use in the pulpit, but simply pouring forth, *currente calamo*, out of a full mind and burdened heart, the great thoughts that struggled in his brain for expression, writing often while he absently spoke aloud, as if his audience were before him, and while his eyes were wet with tears. At such times the amount he could accomplish in a single day, was simply marvelous. Thus in a week, if the fire lasted so long,—and it often lasted for weeks together, or even months,—he could throw off sermon after sermon with the greatest ease. This excess of effort, however, and this drain upon his emotions, necessarily exhausted his strength. The mood burned out by its own vehemence. He thus found himself unable at last to do anything, till little by little his physical system revived, and his mind by rest and a fresh course of reading, regained its tone.

His mind worked as nature works in gathering the moisture from sea and lake and stream. Little by little, through long and oppressive days of heat, the clouds are gathering, till at

last, in their repletion, they pour themselves out refreshingly upon the thirsty earth. It was thus that Dr. Foster, with toil and heat, by independent processes of mind, distilled the knowledge gained by wide courses of reading and painful trains of reasoning, till in his mental fulness, to express his thought was a necessity and a relief. A method like this, while producing great results, necessarily drained his vitality, and brought on disease and death before their time.

His high ideal of sermonizing led him to have a great dislike for preaching old sermons. He did so preach, more or less, as all ministers must and ought. And yet seldom did he repeat a sermon as it was originally written. He had a great habit — if he thought of repeating a sermon — of tearing his old sermons up into their separate heads, and changing the heads about, introducing new divisions here and there. He could do this the more easily from the fact that each sermon of his was rather like a string of pearls than a vase. If the string be broken, the separate pearls are just as valuable and can be re-strung. If the vase is broken it is worthless. The separate heads of a sermon were with him commonly units in themselves, and the unity of the whole discourse was not so strongly marked that a single head could not be omitted or inserted without impairing the force of the whole. In some respects this was a fault, in others an advantage. It certainly is a mighty power when a sermon advances, step by step, like the campaign of a great general, throwing up breastworks on every side of the enemy till he is hemmed in beyond escape, and in the conclusion opening up with a battery of argument that is absolutely convincing. This, however, was not usually Dr. Foster's method. It was not the one best adapted to his type of mind. He naturally leaped at once into the middle of the fray. He could not brook the delay of slow approaches. His methods were not by sapping and mining, nor by the cautious processes of entrenchment. With his first sentences he must open fire upon the enemy, and from first to last his sermons were a continuous cannonade. His temperament led him to strike a succession of ponderous blows, any one of which might be very possibly omitted without weakening the rest, but each

one of which was as nearly irresistible as he could make it. Every man must be himself, and it is no reflection on the value of his sermons to say that Dr. Foster worked by the latter method. Some of the peculiarities of his processes in sermonizing are brought out in the following extracts:—

“My brain works only by concentration and by accumulation. I begin a sermon with forebodings and anxiety. I put down outlines of thought, facts, proofs, illustrations, heads of argument, without knowing at first the method of my discourse, or the binding chain of my ideas. The wheels gather heat and swiftness by the running of the machine. At midnight, after a sitting of sixteen hours, my mind is more efficient than in the morning. I become absorbed in the subject. I cannot leave it without tearing myself away from a delightful employment. New thoughts spring up; new analogies are suggested. Ideas take their relative position. New logical chains are woven. If I am turned away to other employments for two or three hours, the consecutive thoughts are broken apart, the enthusiasm and the passion of thought are suspended, and I cannot on that day resume the efficient action of my mind. It may be a habit which I have formed inadvertently and unwisely. It may be a constitutional infirmity and misfortune. But sure I am it is a fact, and I cannot make it otherwise. Most of my sermons in Lowell have been wholly new. All the rest have been laboriously rewritten. When I went from Henniker to Pelham, I destroyed all my old sermons. When I went from Pelham to Lowell, I resolved to preach no old sermons. I have not preached ten of them, without tearing down the old house and rebuilding completely the edifice, using only such of the former timbers as seemed to me appropriate for a better architecture. I have now five hundred sermons which are nearly as perfect as, with my feeble ability, I can make them.”

“NOVEMBER 17, 1880.

“I have been writing out a list of the sermons and addresses which I have prepared and delivered since I have been in the ministry. Would you like to see it? I estimate my work as follows: 1,500 sermons, 1,000 Sunday-evening addresses, 500 Friday-evening addresses, 132 addresses at communion seasons, 100 Sabbath-school concert addresses, 100 addresses before councils, 50 ordination sermons, 520 funeral addresses, 50 educational lectures, 50 platform speeches. Making the addresses average thirty minutes each in length, I have delivered at least four thousand five hundred of such. Every-

thing has been done by great effort,—nothing extemporaneously. My fear of man, and my embarrassment unless I was certain of my line of thought, have been such that I could not speak impromptu. Often the address has been repeated in soliloquy, in my study, four, five, or six times over. All these services, written or unwritten, have been prepared with great persistency of labor, with intensity of thought, with deep emotion. I have hardly ever written a sermon which has not cost me tears, often copious, gushing tears. I have given all I possessed, of time, talent, sympathy, strength, to my people, with an entire devotion, and with an eye single (if I know my own heart) to the salvation of souls. My success has not been correspondent to my ardent hopes.”

“I preached yesterday, half the day only. My monthly sermon was on ‘Prayer in the Family,’ unwritten, an hour long; preached at the outset with embarrassment, but with enlargement of freedom as I proceeded, and with something of that more direct appeal and more deliberate fervor which characterize my unwritten efforts. I know not which my congregation like better. My style is less elaborate, perhaps my thoughts more emphatic in their conveyance, in the latter method.”

Dr. Foster’s style of preaching naturally corresponded with his methods of study. His sermons were crowded with illustrations, drawn very largely from his wide reading in biography. He was told more than once that his sermons were all windows; but if this were a fault, it was a fault that held the thought of his audiences to the truth he presented. His sermons were strongly marked by emotion. He had that indefinable grace in the ministry called “unction.” He spoke with great swiftness of delivery and often at great length. In this way, while he worked beyond his strength and greatly taxed the attention and retentive powers of his auditors, he yet gained a momentum and power of impression impossible otherwise.

His prayers never failed to move his congregations profoundly. A letter from his father in his early ministry speaks of a prayer which he had offered on some public occasion as attracting great attention, and requests him, if he can recall it, to write it out for his father’s pleasure. This same power in prayer continued with him through life. And

yet these prayers, while wonderful in their sweep of thought and beauty of expression were not orations. They were not like that famous prayer of Mr. Everett's, which a godless reporter characterized as "the most eloquent ever delivered to a Boston audience." They were so humble, so flaming with emotion, so manifestly spoken in the ear of God without thought of man, that all who heard them were caught up by them and borne by the sheer force of their sincerity and fervor to the very gates of heaven. These prayers were invariably carefully prepared with the book of Psalms before him and with various books of devotion in his hand. Dr. Foster also was always accustomed before he went to the house of God, to pace his room and throw his thoughts into suitable shape for public utterance.

Dr. Foster had a high ideal of the ministry, which did not permit him for a moment to live for self, or even to act on any of those principles which with some seem only dictates of ordinary prudence. He never left a parish for the sake of a larger salary, but from a sense of duty refused many tempting invitations where his remuneration would have been doubled. He never held a call in abeyance, to see if he could not do better in a worldly point of view, whether in respect to salary, or comfort, or position. He never did a thing to push himself, or to secure for himself prominence or reputation. His one aim was simply to do his duty as it came to him, and to leave all the rest with God. Some of his views on these matters are given in the following extracts.

"Men of the world, in secular enterprises, may plan for larger business and larger remuneration, for business activity and business success are the leading objects of desire with them; but I do not understand that the minister is at liberty thus to plan for secularities. He is not his own. He belongs to Christ and the Church. He must labor for souls. He is not permitted, by the rule of the Gospel, to reject one field after another, simply or mainly from considerations of salary.

"I have not lived for self-aggrandisement, or money, or ease, or fame. These thoughts have been far from me. I have cherished an absorbing, profound, incessant longing for the

spiritual welfare of this people and of this city. I mourn for my deficiencies in the ministry. With deep humiliation of soul, with tears of a broken heart, and tremblings of a broken frame, I throw myself prostrate before the Cross of Christ and implore pardon for my sins. The mercy, the infinite mercy of Jesus is all my hope. My toils and my accomplishment, my anxiously considered plans, my earnestly pursued purposes, my virtues, and my works seem to me like the vanishing mist before the fires of the last Great Day. But when I stand before the Judgment and my people stand at my side, they will see that love to them has been the mighty tide, like the rush of the Gulf Stream, carrying forward, drawing in, engrossing, controlling my thoughts and my hopes, my pleasures and my occupations.

"I have never been settled over any church which I did not love with a profound esteem, and for which I did not pray with daily and wrestling supplication. What am I and what is my Father's house, that I should be called to minister to the elect of God, to comfort and guide and cheer the beloved of Christ, to stand in a relation so intimate to holy and illustrious teachers of theology? It has always filled me with wonder and humility and thanksgiving and fear."

Dr. Foster was a man of strongly marked feelings. Whenever he was interested in a thing his interest became a passion.

The great principles involved in politics were among the subjects which absorbed his thought. He was by nature a statesman. He knew every movement in Congress and in the politics of the more important States. He knew all the great men of the nation by reputation, and could give on the instant almost any information desired regarding their history and achievements. During his pastorate in Pelham he ran as Whig candidate for representative to the State Legislature, but was fortunately defeated by the other party. We say fortunately; for had he been turned aside in his early ministry into political paths, he might easily, with his passion and his ability in that direction, have been persuaded to give his days to such a life. It would have been no ignoble or useless life, for he was incapable of inactivity or self-aggrandisement, and to him the life of a statesman would have been a high and holy calling; but God had something better in store for him,

and made him quite as useful to his country as he could have been in legislative halls. The pulpit became his place of political influence, and there he ennobled the great principles of a free government by founding them on the teachings of the Bible. He regarded the ministry as under solemn obligation to defend the great basal laws of social order, and in every serious emergency he spoke fearlessly on the duties of the hour. His sermons on Webster, the Nebraska Bill, the Kansas Outrages, the Attack on Sumner, the Fugitive Slave Law, the Civil War, the Duty of Soldiers, on Lincoln, Chase, and on Sumner, were utterances that made a deep impression at the time of their delivery, and had a wide influence.

Dr. Foster was equally interested in moral reforms. Repeatedly have his addresses on temperance been delivered by invitation, to other audiences than those in his own church, and several of these addresses were printed. Of his interest in temperance he says himself:—

“Before I graduated from college I discoursed to a crowded audience of my native town on the virtues and blessedness of total abstinence. I went out from Andover Seminary thirty miles, to Derry, N. H., to deliver an elaborate address on temperance. I mention these two addresses only to show that my zeal was early and was never intermittent. I have preached on temperance more than forty times since I came to Lowell, twice or more every year, sermons elaborated with severe investigation and prayer and anxiety, advocating in every instance teetotalism on the part of every individual; the banishment of all intoxicating drinks from festive occasions; the toning up of public sentiment by constant argument and pure example; and last, not least, a prohibitory law, firm, uncompromising, if possible to be attained in every State. Three of these discourses have been published.”

From the first he was an ardent antislavery man, and most of his political utterances had a bearing on this theme. He had no sympathy with the Garrisonian wing of the antislavery party; he was no extremist; yet was he intensely in earnest, and did his utmost by voice and by pen to bring about the freedom of the slave.

No one ever loved young men more than he. He took the warmest interest in their welfare, sympathized with them in their plans and hopes, and when they sought him for advice, as they often did, counseled them with such loving and unassuming wisdom that they never forgot his kindness. There was a large circle of young men, some in the ministry, some in college, some in his parish, who loved him like a father. Three letters given below illustrate his interest in young men. The first is regarding one of brilliant mind, whose views in religion were unsettled; the second is addressed to a youthful minister; the third is to one of his own flock who had gone out from his parish to enter the ministry.

"I could not agree with his religious opinions, and I avoided disputations with him, but I carefully marked his acuteness of mind, the breadth of his information, the strength of his argument, and I regarded these traits with great admiration. I believed also that what I regarded as his errors would, through God's grace, be forsaken. The young mind, independent, inquisitive, bold, energetic, determined to search into mysteries, holding itself competent to fathom all sciences, exploring with an eagle's eye on every side, stimulated by the progressive spirit of the age, often passes through this very limbo and cloud-land of doubt and denial, before emerging into the bright sunshine of faith. It was so with John P. Durbin, of the Methodist Church; it was so with Albert Barnes, of the Presbyterian Church; it has been so with scores and hundreds of holy and most useful men."

"*My Dear Brother*,—I am about used up to-day, but I must rally strength to express to you my profound sense of obligation for your letter of Sept. 17. Hardly any words ever spoken in my ear, hardly any testimony ever given, as to the results of my labors, have so cheered and quickened me as your kind words. I have mourned, with sincere sorrow, over the inadequacy of my preaching and the deficiency of my labors. If I have had any favorable influence upon the mind of such a ministerial brother as yourself, either directly or indirectly, to prompt, suggest, encourage, or inspire, it is a result much beyond my anticipation; it is a reward of unspeakable value. With deep humility, and with gratitude to God and to you, I accept your testimony. I trust I shall be

able to labor in the future with an increase of courage and hope. I watch your growing power, a power very unusual for any minister to attain; I notice the evidence, ever accumulating, of your high qualifications for the service of the Master; I rejoice in the auspicious omens ever multiplying, which point to you as a leader in the Sacramental Host."

"AUGUST 6, 1874.

"*Dear Brother*,—Your letter of July 17 was read with deep interest and with gratitude for your kindness. For your persistent and determined friendship and devotion, I thank you. When I am lost in the wildernesses of Maine, or Vermont, or Missouri; or in the depths of despondency, weighed down by failures and shortcomings; or in the darkness of perplexity, not knowing where duty leads me; or in sickness, debility, and pain, feeling that death knocks at the door, and that my labors are ended,—then I will trust to your love to lead me out of the dimness of the gloom. It is no flattery for me to say that I have found very few men in my life, young or old, whom my heart and my judgment prompted me to trust more entirely than yourself. I remember the earnest decision with which you rose from your knees, after prayer in my study, saying, 'I will be a Christian.' I remember your beautiful remarks in our prayer-meetings. I remember your manly and instructive sermons in my pulpit, when I was partially disabled, and the kindness which prompted you to help me in time of need. I remember the many interesting and grateful conversations I have had with you. You speak in your letter of 'dips' and of 'chandeliers.' Now, I must be permitted earnestly to say that you do me too much honor and yourself too much discredit by such a comparison. I feel that your light shines very brightly in your beautiful morning, and that mine has been shadowed and imperfect all my life, and is growing more and more dim in the evening twilight. In the matter of intellectual gifts and of schorlarly attainments, you need not fear a comparison with any. But, after all, my beloved brother, if we shine in the pulpit and in the ministry, we shine by a reflected light. There is One, our almighty Redeemer, loving and adorable, who holds in His hands the seven stars, and our brightness is the rendering back of His truth and grace. It is the splendor of scriptural doctrine, it is the purity of a regenerate life, it is the glory of a spiritual mind, it is the light of faith and love and prayer, that give to the true minister his power. All sciences and ingenuities merely human are indeed a candle-dip; all true renderings of

a biblical theology and of a sanctified character are not simply a chandelier, but the effulgence of the risen sun. Believing, as I do, that you stand in near and dear communion with Christ, the Centre and Source of all genuine intellectual or religious illumination, I have had no doubt that your light would burn on more and more brightly, and shine on more and more widely, and shine forever. Usefulness is not bounded by lines of latitude and longitude, but by the limits of influence and by the diffusiveness of truth; and these limits are wide as the world and long as eternity."

Dr. Foster's peculiarities of character were patent to all. He was a man of deep feeling, sensitive as an aspen-leaf to every breath of unkindness or of praise. He was easily stirred to tears. Many a time while reading to his family some bit of poetry, or some pathetic incident in the newspapers, or some passage in his sermons, have his feelings overcome him, so that for the moment he was unable to proceed. He was a man of intense energy of action. Whatever he did, he did as if life depended on doing it at once. If he worked in his garden, he kept at it till his clothing was drenched with perspiration. If he was in his study, he drove his pen till his exhausted brain could do no more. If he was preaching, it was with such fire that when the task was over, there was no strength in him. If he conversed on great themes, it was with such earnestness and anxiety, that when the interview was ended, he was as exhausted as if he had been preaching. He did not know how to take things easily, and this energy within was a terrific force, that racked his enfeebled body till it could endure the strain no longer and gave up its life.

He was not only a man of profound humility, but he had a morbid self-distrust. He had no adequate sense of his own power. He had not sufficient self-confidence to do his work without anxiety. His early training had not been favorable for developing those qualities which put a man at ease in positions of responsibility. There was something very charming in this unusual combination of humility and ability, but the humility was extreme, and bred in him a depression of spirits which impaired his usefulness and helped to shorten his life.

Most of the time through life he fought with disease, and undoubtedly disease was largely responsible for the clouds which were always hovering over him. Yet these three allied influences, morbid self-depreciation, disease, and despondency, do but enhance the merit of his work, for it is truly wonderful that in the face of these combined hindrances, he should have done so much and done it so well.

He was a man of intense affections. Never had man a warmer heart than he. He loved his family and his friends with a strength that hesitated at no self-denial for their sake. He was a devoted husband and father. He ruled in his house by love. His children almost worshipped him. Unlike so many public men, he did not neglect them while giving his strength to outside duties. He made them feel his love, and taught them to confide in him without the least restraint. As they grew to years of thoughtfulness, he welcomed them to a more intimate relationship. He took them into his counsels; he treated them as equals; he threw them upon their honor. Thus it came to pass that no action and scarcely a thought of theirs did not receive his supervision and direction, while it was all done so gently, and courteously, and kindly, that the children had no sense of being governed, only of being loved.

He was of a most charitable disposition. He never judged men harshly, but both by nature and from principle, sought to find the most honorable motives back of other men's actions. He never allowed himself to speak unkindly of others, and checked at once, kindly but firmly, any disposition towards fault-finding or harsh judgments which he discovered in his children. He had no patience with gossip or slander, and never, even in the privacy of his home-life, did he allow himself in criticisms on the conduct of others. The universal rule of his life was expressed in these words, which he once wrote to one of his children:—

“It is a rule which you ought to adopt in any family, and in every family, to say nothing of the absent, if you cannot speak in their praise. Avoid, in your conversation, censure and criticism, and the mention of people's faults.”

His piety was sincere and earnest, — not a profession, but a daily practice. He was often in prayer, and by his words and life, showed his faith in God, and his desire to do right. He loved devotional reading, and he loved his Bible.

Some idea of the nature of his labors may be gained from the following list, which was found among his papers after his death. It is undoubtedly imperfect.

OCCASIONS IN LOWELL OF SPECIAL EFFORT AND ANXIETY.

Huntington Hall,	Lecture on John Milton; before the Mechanics' Association.	
Huntington Hall,	Lecture on Prohibition.	
Huntington Hall,	Lecture on Temperance.	<i>Published.</i>
Huntington Hall,	Lecture on Temperance.	<i>Published.</i>
Huntington Hall,	Address, Sabbath-school Anniversary, 1854.	
Huntington Hall,	Address, Sabbath-school Anniversary, 1866.	
Y. M. C. A. Rooms,	Dedication Address.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Address, Sabbath-school Convention.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	On the Family; before the Reform Society.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Funeral of Deacon Baneroff.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Ordination of Mr. Seabury; Prayer.	
John-street Church,	Foreign Missions.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Six Sermons on the War.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Sermon on Commerce.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Sermon on Temperance.	<i>Published.</i>
John-street Church,	Charles Sumner.	
John-street Church,	Sermon on Seaman's Cause.	<i>Published.</i>
Eliot Church,	Installation of Dr. Cleaveland; Charge to the People.	
Eliot Church,	Ordination of Mr. A. P. Foster; Right Hand of Fellowship.	
Eliot Church,	Installation of Mr. Greene; Sermon.	
First Church,	Ordination of Mr. Jenkins; Prayer.	
First Church,	Installation of Mr. James; Charge to the Pastor.	
First Church,	Installation of Mr. Baker; Charge to the Pastor.	
High-street Church,	Installation of Mr. Lanphear; Charge to the People.	
High-street Church,	Installation of Mr. Street; Charge to the People.	

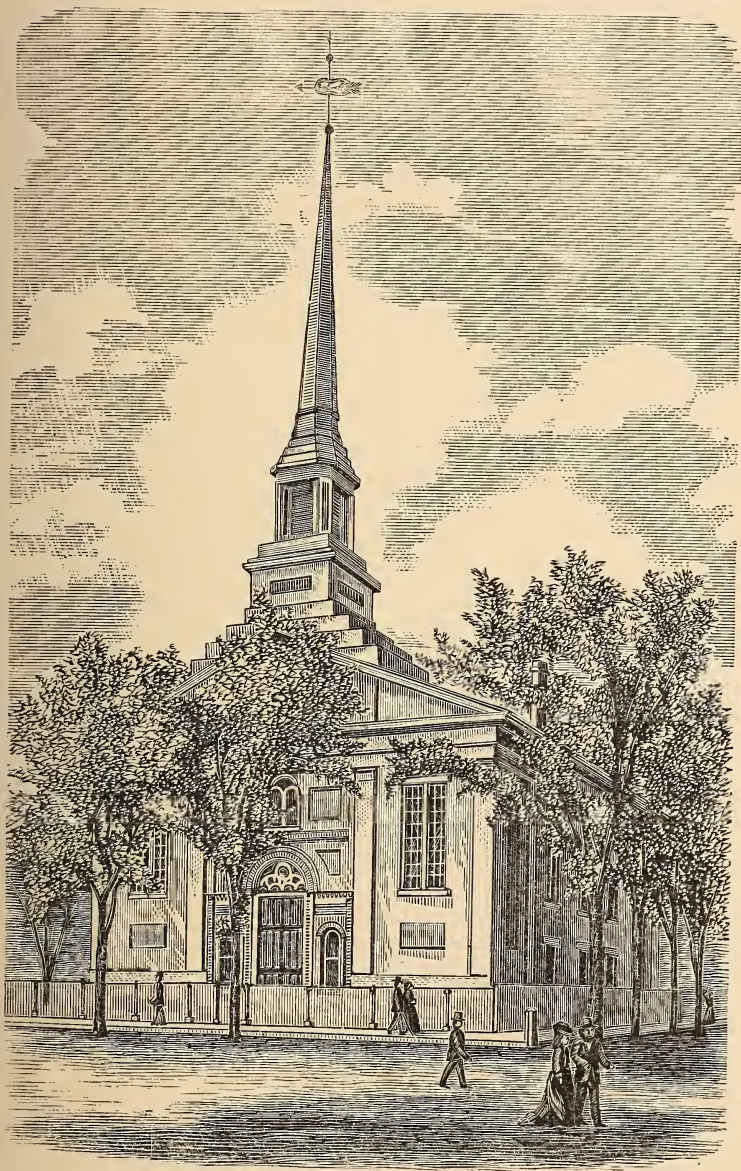
SIMILAR OCCASIONS ELSEWHERE.

Concord, N. H.,	Address before the American Ins.	<i>Asked for Publication.</i>
Concord, N. H.,	Installation of Mr. Ayer; Sermon.	
Concord, N. H.,	Address; Ladies' Benevolent Society Anniversary.	
Concord, N. H.,	N. H. General Association, Home Missions.	<i>Published.</i>
Derry, N. H.,	Temperance Discourse, July 4.	
Derry, N. H.,	Installation of Mr. Parsons; Charge to the People.	
Hanover, N. H.,	Installation of Mr. Cutter; Sermon.	
Hanover, N. H.,	Funeral of Rev. R. N. Wright; Sermon.	<i>Published.</i>
Seabrook, N. H.,	Installation of Mr. Steele; Sermon.	
Manchester, N. H.,	Installation of Dr. Bartlett; Right Hand.	
Nashua, N. H.,	Installation of Dr. Adams; Prayer.	
Walpole, N. H.,	Installation of Mr. Stowe; Sermon.	
Milford, N. H.,	Installation; Charge to the Pastor.	
Amherst, N. H.,	Address on Agriculture.	<i>Published.</i>

Windham, N. H.,	Funeral of Mrs. Thayer.	<i>Published.</i>
Atkinson, N. H.,	On Education ; Academy Anniversary.	
Pembroke, N. H.,	On Education ; Academy Anniversary.	
Dover, N. H.,	General Association, Home Missions.	
Westfield, Mass.,	Gen'l Association ; Sermon on Home Missions.	<i>Published.</i>
Westfield, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Bowker ; Sermon.	
Methuen, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Grassie ; Sermon.	
Clinton, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. DeWitt S. Clark ; Sermon.	
Lancaster, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Doe ; Sermon.	
Westminster, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Emerson ; Sermon.	
Dunstable, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Kingsbury ; Sermon.	
Tewksbury, Mass.,	Installation ; Sermon.	
Groveland, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Paine ; Sermon.	
W. Newbury, Mass.,	Ordination and Installation of Rev. Davis Foster ; Sermon.	
Southbridge, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Dodge ; Sermon.	
Westhampton, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Roswell Foster ; Sermon.	
Boston, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. W. C. Foster ; Sermon.	<i>Published.</i>
Pittsfield, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Roswell Foster ; Sermon.	
Putney, Vt.,	Installation of Rev. Amos Foster ; Sermon.	
Henniker, N. H.,	On Baptism ; Four Sermons.	<i>Published.</i>
Henniker, N. H.,	Assault on Summer.	<i>Published.</i>
Salem, Mass.,	Address on Presbyterian Correspondence.	<i>Published.</i>
Dummerston, Vt.,	On Education ; Academy Anniversary.	
Bradford, Mass.,	On Education ; Ladies' Seminary Anniversary.	
Bradford, Mass.,	On Reading ; Ladies' Seminary Anniversary.	
Monson, Mass.,	On Education ; Academy Anniversary.	
Newburyport, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Hooker ; Charge to the People.	
Westford, Mass.,	Installation ; Charge to the Pastor.	
Holyoke, Mass.,	Ordination of Rev. Mr. Eastman ; Charge to the Pastor.	
Winchendon, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Davis Foster ; Sermon.	
Malden, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. A. P. Foster ; Sermon.	
Chelsea, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. A. P. Foster ; Sermon.	
Georgetown, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Chas. Beecher ; Charge to the Pastor.	
Pelham, N. H.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Farwell ; Charge to the People.	
Gardner, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Stanton ; Charge to the Pastor.	
Dracut, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Boardman ; Prayer.	
Billerica, Mass.,	On Temperance.	
Chelmsford, Mass.,	On Temperance.	
Lawrence, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. C. E. Fisher ; Sermon.	
Haverhill, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Allen ; Charge to the People.	
Chelmsford, Mass.,	Installation of Rev. Mr. Phillips ; Sermon.	
Hanover, N. H.,	Dartmouth College ; Address at Commencement.	
Amherst, Mass.,	Amherst College ; Address at Commencement.	
Williamstown, Mass.,	Williams College ; Address at Commencement.	
Middlebury, Vt.,	Middlebury College ; Address at Commencement.	
Easthampton, Mass.,	Character of Forefathers.	<i>Asked for Publication.</i>
Boston, Mass.,	On Education ; Anniversary of Miss Gilman's School.	
Lyne, N. H.,	On Music ; Anniversary of Music School.	
Hanover, N. H.,	On Temperance, July 4.	
Springfield, Mass.,	On Gambling ; Dr. Buckingham's Church.	
Pelham, N. H.,	Responsibilities of Youth ; Lyceum Address.	<i>Published.</i>
Lowell, Mass.,	On Agriculture ; before Mid'x Agric'l Society.	<i>Published.</i>
Newton, Mass.,	On Church Activities ; General Association.	

The following is a list of his published sermons and addresses : —

- 1843 — Four Sermons on Baptism. Preached at Henniker, N. H.
 - 1849 — "Defence of the Gospel Necessary." Preached at the Installation of Rev. W. C. Foster, over the Shawmut Church, Boston.
 - 1849 — "Ministerial Fidelity and its Reward." In memory of Rev. R. N. Wright. Preached at Hanover, N. H.
 - 1850 — "Duty of Young Men." An Address before the Lyceum, at Pelham, N. H.
 - 1851 — An Address on Agriculture, delivered before the Hillsboro' Agricultural and Mechanical Society, at Amherst, N. H.
 - 1854 — "The Rights of the Pulpit," and "Perils of Freedom." Two Sermons preached at the John-street Church, Lowell.
 - 1855 — "The Family Relation." An Address before the Female Moral Reform Society of Lowell. Printed in *The Friend of Virtue*, Aug. 15, 1855.
 - 1856 — "A North-side View of Slavery." Preached at Henniker, N. H.
 - 1856 — An Address on Agriculture. Delivered before the Middlesex North Agricultural Society, at Lowell.
 - 1857 — "The Relations of the Sabbath-school to the Work of the Ministry." An Address before the Third State Convention of Massachusetts Sabbath-school Teachers, in Lowell.
 - 1858 — An Address at the Funeral of Joseph Hale Stickney.
 - 1859 — "Remove the Stumbling Blocks." A Sermon on Temperance, preached in Huntington Hall, Lowell.
 - 1861 — "The Moral Power of Commerce." Preached in Lowell.
 - 1861 — A Sermon before the Butler Rifles. Preached in Lowell. Printed in the *Lowell Sentinel*, May 25, 1861.
 - 1861 — A Sermon on the War. Preached in Lowell. Printed in the *Lowell Sentinel*, April 27, 1861.
 - 1862 — "The Constitution our Ark in the Storm." Preached in West Springfield.
 - 1865 — Home Missionary Sermon. Preached before the General Association of Massachusetts, at Westfield, Mass.
 - 1866 — Address on Temperance. Delivered at Dracut, Mass., before the Middlesex North Temperance Society. Printed in *The Nation* (a temperance paper), Oct. 1866.
 - 1867 — Address at the Dedication of the Rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association of Lowell. Printed in the *Lowell Daily Courier* of April 5, 1867.
 - 1868 — "The Sailor Entitled to our Practical Sympathy." Preached in Lowell. Printed in the *Sailors' Magazine* of March, 1868.
 - 1871 — Sermon Commemorative of Dea. Selwin Bancroft. Preached in Lowell.
 - 1873 — "Duty of Faith and Enlargement in Foreign Missions." Preached in Lowell.
 - 1876 — "The Temperance Reform, its Agent, its Argument, its Method." Preached in Lowell. Printed in *Vox Populi* of April 22, 1876.
 - 1879 — Address at the Fortieth Anniversary of the John-street Church, Lowell.
- About twenty newspaper articles, printed mostly in *The Congregationalist* and in Lowell papers.



JOHN-STREET CHURCH IN 1883.

FUNERAL ADDRESS.

BY REV. OWEN STREET, D. D., OF LOWELL, MASS.

[The funeral of Dr. Foster took place on Thursday afternoon, April 13, 1882. A private service was held at his house, his son offering the prayer. The public services were at the John-street Church, the Hon. George Stevens having supervision of the funeral, and Rev. J. B. Seabury having charge of the exercises. The walls of the church, the pulpit, and the pulpit chair were appropriately draped. Floral emblems, contributed by the ladies of the society, the "Foster Club" (a young men's debating society connected with the church), and former parishioners, were abundant. The church was filled with the friends of the deceased. Rev. Owen Street, D. D., who had been associated in the city with Dr. Foster longer than any other Congregational minister, preached the sermon, and Rev. J. B. Seabury offered prayer. Among other ministers present were Rev. J. M. Greene, D. D., and Rev. Smith Baker, of Lowell; Rev. S. W. Hanks, of Cambridge, Mass., Dr. Foster's predecessor in the John-street pastorate; Rev. Augustus Berry, of Pelham, N. H.; Rev. DeWitt S. Clark, of Salem, Mass., and Rev. Samuel Bowker, of Dracut, Mass., several of whom assisted in the exercises. The selection of hymns was made from those specially dear to the departed, and the hymns were sung by those whose voices Dr. Foster had often heard with delight. The pall-bearers were chosen from among Dr. Foster's parishioners and valued friends. At the close of the service, in accordance with Dr. Foster's wish, often expressed, his body was laid in the Lowell Cemetery, in the lot given him years since by his parishioners.]

JOHN 5 : 35. — "*He was a burning and a shining light.*"

THESE words from the lips of one who could never utter excessive eulogy or false praise, have told what was truest and best in many a noble life. Something like this is often said

of one and another with an inferior meaning. There is the light of a cheerful countenance that can kindle a like cheerfulness in others; there is the light of a sunny spirit that can dispel gloom from other minds; there is the light and fire of energy and purpose and determination that can inspire with enterprise and lead to grand achievements; there is the light of intelligence that can guide in paths that are safe and full of promise; there is the light of learning that can uncover treasures of knowledge; there is the light of genius that can captivate and entrance. But not any one nor all of these can be the light of the world, in the sense that the Great Teacher intended. They are but the coruscations and glintings and iris hues that play around the candlestick on which the light is set. The candlestick is something; it is God's own workmanship, and proclaims the skill of the Creator. More than this: it exhibits the proof of his great design that it should give conspicuity and effect to the light; holding it forth where it is especially needed, and increasing its volume and power by a reflection and radiation of its own. Still more: the human candlestick becomes itself luminous with the divinely given light. All the pleasing glow of natural endowments or acquired accomplishments takes on a supernal brightness; the cold light of the planet becomes the radiant fire of the star; and the star, by the law of growth that God has ordained, enlarges its magnitude, leaves the measures of its own past and present illuminating power behind, and leaves many that have shone well by its side behind, even as they in turn are leaving others behind; and the varying grades of these luminaries below give token of what is foretold of the heavenly firmament, where one star differs from another star in glory. The text, as you are well aware, was applied by our Lord to John the Baptist; one so eminent among the great lights that God had given to the world, that the same infallible Authority declared that no one of them all was greater than he. He was, in an almost typical sense, a burning and shining light. There was light and fire. There were wonderful gifts and special grace. There was the he-

roism of a noble nature, and the fearless loyalty to truth that is born of a thorough consecration to God.

Good men are not necessarily alike. Those who are equally good send out the light of their goodness at different angles and with different effect. If the effects are equally valuable, the phenomena are different. We may characterize with the same words those who are widely different. We may say of such men as Chrysostom, Augustine, Huss, Wycliff, Luther, Baxter, Eliot, Fénelon, Whitefield, Edwards, Wilberforce, and Payson, though no two of them were alike, each one was a burning and shining light.

With the same confidence and with a similar meaning we apply the words to this dear departed servant of God, whose removal we are mourning to-day.

The brief limits of time to which I am necessarily restricted to-day forbid that I should repeat here the details of his history, that have already been given to the public by the local press. It must be my part to set forth before you, so far as I may be able, this man of God as we have known him. This would be a most easy thing to do, if it were to be undertaken in a volume without stint of pages; for the material is ample, and the field to be traversed full of striking features and points of more than ordinary interest. The difficult thing to-day, is to select and keep things within their own proper proportions.

First of all, we must have a moment for that remarkable home from which he came. How few examples, if any, can be pointed out in New England, or in Old England, or on this continent, or any other, of seven sons in one family, educated in college, and six of them becoming ministers of the Gospel! I know not where to look for them. Of these seven, this beloved brother was the first-born. Would you know how they all looked up to him? One of them will tell us, in a letter written from Iowa only two weeks ago.

“When the time comes to pass to the other side, there are dear ones to meet and welcome us there. You will make the majority of the brother and sister band at home at last. Wil-

liam, Jonathan, Edward, Daniel, Charles, Eden; and after no long time, the other five. . . . Will father and mother receive and welcome all the eleven? If we are so happy, all the younger members of the family will bring with me a meed of thanks to the oldest brother, whose course, often under circumstances of difficulty and depression, was an inspiration and a stimulus to us all. . . . The great grief of my spirit is, not that you are going home, but that I may not see you mount the chariot of glory."

Let this same letter tell us one thing more that is significant, and is told in a few words.

"As a family, we have all lived too fast; not in the ordinary meaning of that phrase, but in a too free expenditure of nerve-force. We inherited from our mother an intense nervous organization. This was aggravated in the case of some of the family by unfavorable circumstances. With an ambition to render effective service, we have worked in a worry that has worn us rapidly."

From this you see that it was something more than the mere fact of priority of birth that established upon him the birthright of leadership in that remarkable family. Did time permit, there could be no more interesting chapter than to trace the history, as I have heard him give it, of those brothers, and their noble record of service rendered to their country in the time of her great peril, and in the bitter conflict between the principles of freedom and slavery that preceded it; and the still higher record of their service rendered directly to their God. But we must pass from this topic, and with the bare mention of his college life, and the important episode of nearly two years of labor as an instructor of youth in the academy of Pembroke, made doubly interesting by his marriage at that time, and the time spent in the study of theology at Andover, and speak of his great life-work in the ministry of the Gospel.

I have had before me the sermon that was preached at his ordination, by his uncle, Rev. Amos Foster, still living at the age of eighty-five years. Even here we read, as in all his subsequent life, of the young candidate for the pastoral office

“trembling with the feeling of his own insufficiency.” This feeling never deserted him. It was out of this weakness that he was made strong. It was his constant leaning upon the arm of the Almighty, that gave him power both with God and with man. It was thus that he became so strong in faith, in prayer, and in his eloquent pleading with his fellow-men. That incipient ministry of forty years ago has a warm place in tender and grateful memories still. And so it has been all the way. In Henniker, in Pelham, in Lowell, in West Springfield, there are testimonies in living hearts, and testimonies borne by the silent marble, that prove that he was no ordinary man. There was in his nature the charm of an unaffected modesty that won all hearts. He was too intelligent not to know his great strength with the people; and the ever-fresh testimony that spoke out of the abundance of their hearts, kept him reminded of it; and yet he was the most diffident and self-distrustful of all the public men I have ever known. One had need only to be in the pulpit with him, and see how, with all his self-command, and his complete consciousness of labored and ample preparation, the inevitable agitation brought a visible tremor upon his whole frame, to be thoroughly convinced that this was an element of his nature, deep-seated and unconquerable. And it was no weakness; it was simply the harp trembling with the music of the strings. It was the mighty enginery of the soul straining and shaking all the timbers of the frame-work with which it was encased. There was no reaching after popular applause. His soul was too deeply freighted with the feeling of the responsibility of the hour for this, and he stood too near the infinite and the eternal to admit of it. What others have done, or attempted to do, by the graces of elocution, he did more effectively by the fervor of a holy faith, and a heart set on fire with his theme. The truth which he preached had full possession of him: it inspired him; it transformed him. He believed it fully, and submitted his own nature to it, and felt through all his soul that a like submission was the one thing needful for those to whom he preached.

The one overmastering principle of his life was the deep piety of his heart, an all-constraining love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and an all-subordinating devotion to His cause, and the promotion of His Gospel in the world. His Christian character was of the purest, kindest, tenderest, and most conscientious type. He well illustrated in his conversation, and in all the spirit and temper of his life, the virtues that he preached. He has reminded me of the saying of Tillotson in regard to Bishop Berkeley, that "he had never thought so much learning, so much goodness, so much gentleness and humility and piety, could be the portion of any but angels, till he saw Mr. Berkeley." But our dear brother, though keyed to so gentle and tender a mold of spirit, was not lacking in those elements of character that give firmness and courage. There was in him the heroism of the true soldier and the unfaltering decision of the martyr. He did not wait to ascertain whether an idea, an enterprise, or a reform would be popular, before he espoused it. The only question was, Is it right? Is it true? Is it in the line of progress which God approves, and which His Gospel aims to secure? Let him ascertain this, and his mind was made up. With a spirit of universal courtesy and kindness towards those who differed from him, "with malice towards none, with charity for all," he girded himself for the fight, and never laid his armor by so long as he had strength to wear it. In 1860, he modestly said, in reply to a remark by Dr. Cleaveland, that he had at that time four hundred sermons prepared with such a degree of care and labor, that he did not know that he could improve them. These were his ordinary Sabbath sermons. Their number has since been greatly increased. But in addition to these, he was constantly and earnestly laboring for the good of society, and for the benefit of his fellow-men, and especially of the young. He was greatly interested in every enterprise of reform, and in all our institutions of education.

His style was unmistakably and entirely his own. It was his own, not as his sermons and addresses were his own. These were the products of his art. The art and skill lay behind

them, and governed the forces of invention and reason and imagination that produced them. His style was his own, as his soul was his own; as his memory, his ingenuity, his fancy, his zeal, his taste, were his own. Its genesis was from his own deepest nature. It was deeper than any influence of instructors, or authors, or rules; it was deeper than any purpose, or plan, or model, that he may have entertained. It was wholly from within. It was not made, but born. It was not built; it grew. It was not woven as the figured tapestry; it sent out its forming jets and currents as the crystal, or rather as the life-forces in the growing child.

He was not an imitator; he was an originator. And this made him superior to artificial rules. He was not superior to principles of chaste composition and good taste; for good taste was one of his principles. The careful student of any of his more labored productions, cannot fail to see how he pruned the luxuriance of nature, and chastened the exuberance of fancy, and curbed the excess of metaphor, by the severe discipline of an unsparing taste. But this was as the constraint which a man sometimes puts upon his natural gait in walking. You are at no loss to see what belongs to him by nature, and wherein he has put himself to the task of correcting what he regards as defects of nature, or as the outcome of previous neglect.

His style was, first of all, *clear*. He knew what he wanted to say, and he knew how to say it in such a way as not to be misunderstood. His style was in this respect like the most transparent glass; or like the pure, undisturbed water of a quiet lake, as I have seen it under a strong artificial illumination at night, where you could look down through to the bottom, and see every pebble that was lying there. This was a great excellence of his style, and gave him great power in his preaching. It was *forcible* as well as clear. If our language had one word better fitted than another for his purpose, it could not well escape him; he was sure to have it,—the word that was surest, and the word that was strongest. He knew how to make his thought clear, moreover, and strong as well,

by a copious use of well-put antitheses and contrasts; and these were not unfrequently rounded off by a startling climax of great beauty and power. His style would be pronounced ornate, but for the suggestion which that word carries of a direct endeavor in the way of adornment. This every one who knew him well would unhesitatingly repudiate. Indeed, a single hour's conversation with him would settle the point for any person of ordinary discernment, that he had no occasion to seek for metaphors, or tropes, or felicitous turns of expression, or ornamentation of any kind. These came almost unbidden, and seemed as natural as his breath.

His style has been compared to that of Jeremy Taylor. It is by no means strange that any one should be reminded of that eminent man; for there was certainly this in common,—great fertility of thought, a most facile command of fitting incidents and imagery, and the capacity to soar in marvelous flights of sublime and tender feeling. But there is this difference: when listening to Dr. Foster you felt sure that the warm breathings of his soul were never alloyed with anything that was artificial; and when he essayed his loftiest flights, you were never conscious of the fear that your aeronaut had forgotten his ballast. It was so natural for him to put things clearly, and to adorn whatever he wrote with the pleasing graces of his style, that his opponent in an argument had always occasion to thank him for a better statement of his position than he could have given himself. I well remember an occasion when, at the close of a united service, in which Dr. Foster had unsparingly dissected the monstrosity of modern pantheism, the lamented Dr. Blanchard, himself a fine master of the English language, after expressing an emphatic commendation of the discourse, remarked, that he had been exercised with a momentary fear, while listening to the opening statement of the error he had been combatting, that he was making it attractive by a more fascinating dress of language than its advocates had ever been able to command. The reply brought out the fact that it was a point of conscience with him to give the other side the advantage of as fair a statement as he could.

The one feature of his style, which all will remember best, was that in which he most resembled the Rev. Phillips Brooks; a feature that, as related to his rapid delivery, was both cause and effect, each reacting on the other. But it had a deeper source. It was born of the impetuous fervor of his heart, and the warm, earnest, gushing pathos of his Christian zeal; the feeling that he had a point to carry for his Master, that must be carried as by an onset. It seemed like the momentum of a squadron of cavalry in a charge, — every spur drawing blood, and everything depending on their reaching the opposing battery and dealing the decisive blow in a moment of time.

It must not be supposed that the deep earnestness of his nature, and his engrossment in spiritual themes, left no place for those lighter chords which God has strung in the human harp. His brethren in the ministry, and many others, knew him better than that. He had a vein of genuine humor, suited indeed to the delicacy of his whole nature, but nimble and bright, and near enough to the surface to come easily into play on fit occasions.

There was many a Monday morning, when the five pastors were gathered in Dr. Blanchard's study, and he admirably contributed his part in the life of the conversation, the innocent sparkle of wit, and the flow of soul. For this, as for all his work, he was well provided by the extent of his reading, the quickness of his memory, his treasures of incident and anecdote, and his knowledge of general history.

His aptness in the fitting use of incidents is beautifully illustrated in his closing words at the fortieth anniversary of the John-street Church.

"It is related," said he, "of Gen. Winfield Scott, at the battle of Lundy's Lane, that in the midst of the conflict he was wounded; that after that, with his arms and neck and breast all bathed in gore, he rode up to a group of athletic, brave young men (a portion of them his staff), and said to them: 'I am weak and faint with loss of blood; I request one of these vigorous young men to mount my horse before me, and allow me to cling to him for support, while we ride forward once

more to encourage the army, and complete the victory begun.' One of these young men, valiant and strong, obeyed the request. General Scott put his arms around him, and they plunged again into the battle. Three years ago I endeavored to secure, and through the favor of God, through the generosity of this people, through the consecration of my beloved young brother to a great work, I did secure a wise, strong, sympathetic soldier, ardent in his love to the cause, and in his devotion to the church, to hold me up. He has nobly done it thus far, but he could not do it longer, and no one could. Wounded, and faint, and fallen, I lie before this church, and there, in all human probability, I must lie till the end shall come."

And now, dear brethren and friends, the "end" has "come." It has come through a long wrestling with disease and pain. There have been sharp conflicts and agonies of the flesh, such as few are called to endure. But the spirit has been calm, trustful, serene, and resigned. The good fight of faith has been fought through to the end, and the victory won. I have spoken for you all. Allow me one word of tender and affectionate tribute for myself. I have known him longer and perhaps better than most of his brethren in the ministry, outside of his own kindred. I remember the brotherly kindness with which he received me when I first came to Lowell, and the judicious and timely words of encouragement from him, which were especially helpful then. Many a time he filled a place as an angel strengthening me, which there was no other to fill. I gratefully acknowledge a large debt of gratitude to the other brethren whom I then met in these Lowell pulpits, and to those who have succeeded them. But that which I owe to the memory of this dear, saintly brother, stands by itself. It was a last proof of his kindness, that I am permitted, at his request, to say for his brethren and friends these parting words.

What a legacy, dearly beloved friends of his kindred, and brethren of this church, and fellow-citizens of Lowell, all ye who have known him, is the memory of such a man, such a husband, such a father, such a brother, such a pastor, such a citizen, such a faithful, patient toiler beyond his strength,—

giving himself in weariness and painfulness to these manifold labors for our good!

No better words can I find to close these remarks than his own, delivered at the funeral of a pastor whom he especially loved:—

“We believe that our friend and brother is now wearing the crown, and that in the Judgment and throughout eternity many will render thanksgiving to God for his example and influence. We believe that the righteousness of Christ with its glory and its radiance enfolds him, and that communion with Christ will henceforth be his joy and reward. We rejoice in the confident hope that he has entered into rest,—rest from toil and care and pain and sin and grief, into that rest where they cease not day nor night crying, ‘Holy, holy, holy art Thou, Lord God Almighty.’

“While his spirit rests not, his body sleeps sweetly, and the graves of his own people are around him. As in the patience of hope and the labors of love he had lived among them, so among them in the calm triumph of the true Christian he died. His works do follow him. The seeds of truth which he has sown in other hearts will be watered by the tears that embalm his memory. And from the firmament whither he has ascended will shine another star to guide them on their way.”

MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

BY REV. J. M. GREENE, D. D., OF LOWELL, MASS.

[The esteem and love of the Sunday-school for Dr. Foster found expression in a Memorial Service on Sunday evening, May 15, 1882. The attendance was very large, considering the fact that a heavy rain was falling at the time, and much interest and sympathy were shown. The first exercise was a responsive service, entitled "The Life and Death of the Righteous," in which, in response to questions by the leader, A. K. Whitcomb, Esq., nearly forty of the most precious of the many quotations from the Bible, which would be appropriate to such an occasion, were repeated by members of the school. Rev. J. M. Greene, D. D., of the Eliot Church, Lowell, followed with the commemorative address, which is given below.]

It is a pleasant yet sad task that has been assigned me to-night. I love to think of the life and character of the good man whose memory we have assembled to recall; but I do not love to feel that in the flesh we shall see him no more. He is not dead; he lives beyond the skies. Jesus said: "Who-soever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Our dear father and friend did "live and believe"; therefore he is not *dead*. We do not take the comfort which we might in the Word of God, because we do not more than half believe it. Our dear friend never lived so truly and so bounteously as now. The life in the flesh is as nothing, compared with the life before the throne of God. He is now one of "the spirits of the just made perfect," and is glorious far beyond the power of words to express.

The first remark which I would make about Dr. E. B. Foster, is, that he was truly a *great* man.

Twenty-five years ago I saw and heard Dr. Foster at Amherst College. He came there when I was a student, and one evening gave an address before the Society of Inquiry. I was then a mere boy, but the address made such an impression on me, that I can now tell not only the theme on which he discoursed, but the heads and no little part of the discourse itself. I can tell the very place where I sat as I listened to the discourse, the person who sat by my side, and our remarks when the service was over.

But to show that this is not a singular instance of his power of impressing his subjects, I will state that the only other times when I heard Dr. Foster speak, before I came to Lowell, were his preaching a sermon at the installation of his brother Roswell, in Westhampton, Mass., in the year 1856, and his delivering an address before the Massachusetts Teachers' Institute, in 1860. Though twenty-seven years have elapsed since the sermon was heard, and twenty-three since the lecture, yet they are in my mind with remarkable freshness.

Now I claim that he who can impress himself like this upon a youthful mind, is a *great* man. There is something far beyond the ordinary range of writers and preachers, either in his thought or in his way of presenting it. There was a wonderful sincerity about the man. You felt as you heard him, that every word and syllable and letter had been weighed, and that he was pouring it forth, not for effect, but to reach your soul and influence your life for good. The spirit of self-sacrifice was in the very bearing and tones of the man. And that was a mighty element of his power. There was an entire self-abnegation, and a going forth of soul and grasping for high and holy uses the souls of all who heard him.

When he was rapt away in his highest strains of oratory, it was as the rushing of mighty waters, and his audience was often breathless, as if they expected the breaking in of a flood; yet he was always self-possessed. There was nothing wild or extravagant in his manner or utterance, but he seemed like

one who had hold of the very throne of God, and was urging men to come and enjoy what he knew to be a substantial good. A man who has the power thus to seize his audience and bear it along with him, is a great man indeed. Some speakers achieve their results through the tricks of oratory; but there was no trickery in Dr. Foster. He was an Israelite in whom was no guile. He went straight and honestly at his work. He told his hearers what he wanted of them, and set himself with no indirectness or strategem to bring them to his objective point. He held you often so spell-bound that it was with a sense of relief when he had done. He carried you aloft so high, that if you did not surrender yourself to him, you felt almost dizzy, and fear lest you should fall would creep over you.

I think his greatness as an orator consisted in a remarkable union of solid and affluent thought, and rich and glowing words to express it. It was not verbiage,—for that is shallow, and soon becomes powerless to move the hearer. It was not thought alone,—for that is ponderous, and soon wearies the hearer. The great thought-preachers, without imagination and fervency of speech, have produced treatises to be read, but they often had little power before an audience. Dr. Foster's sermons, should they be printed, will delight the reader, as with him to utter them they delighted the hearer.

Another thing to be said about Dr. Foster, is, that he was a man of great apparent timidity, but of real courage. There was no flourishing of trumpets, no bombast of manner, no brass in his make, but a shrinking from the public gaze and a self-retirement, which are, in the minds of many, associated with faint-heartedness. The Duke of Wellington once said that no one knew how much he had suffered in anticipation of a battle. His whole nature shrank from it. Yet when he was in it, he was lion-hearted. Dr. Chalmers said he never went into a pulpit to preach, except with quaking knees. We all know that when the work was begun, Chalmers was very boldness itself. I think this shows what true courage is. It is not to be destitute of fear; only fools are that. He who

comprehends what is involved in the issue of an important act, may well tremble in view of it. As Wellington foresaw the bloodshed and anguish of the battle-field, his whole nature cried out, "Oh! that I could escape it!" As Chalmers thought how the words which he should utter would be a savor of death to some, as well as a savor of life to others, he trembled at the thought of standing as a spokesman between sinful men and a holy God. Yet two more courageous men never lived than Wellington and Chalmers. They went intelligently into the conflict, and retired not till the victory was won. Dr. Foster was a man of the same stamp. He had a clear, full, even painful comprehension of what is involved in being a preacher of the Gospel. He never entered the pulpit but the weight of a mountain seemed to rest upon him. Gladly would he escape if he could. But he was an ambassador of God; he was under a commission from the Most High, and must speak; and he did speak, as "a dying man to dying men." His sense of responsibility was deep and keen. He always spoke in love, but always with plainness, and with an urgency that pressed itself upon the souls of men. He never turned aside from a truth because it would not be relished by the natural heart. He never blunted the edge of the sword of the Spirit lest it should cut into and expose hidden lusts. He never diluted a doctrine because it was too strong. That would have shown pusillanimity and faint-heartedness, — not a particle of which he had. He felt that God was to be feared, rather than men; which thought filled him with courage to do his whole duty. He did not hesitate to warn men of their danger, describing it to them fully. The self-righteous hearer did not receive any flattery from his lips. The hearer who was entranced with the eloquence of his words found that there was sense in what he heard, as well as sound. There were home-thrusts of truth, sharp and scathing rebukes of sin, deep and pitiless unfoldings of iniquity in the heart, a merciless analysis of the purposes and motives which govern men's lives; and with it all was the tenderness of a woman and the gentleness of a child.

These qualities manifest courage in its highest forms. Not thoughtless, brutal courage,—cowards possess that,—but a virtue which springs from a holy purpose, and dwells deep down in the soul, showing itself when the occasion requires. Had Dr. Foster lived in the times of persecution, he would have been a martyr. Had his ministry fallen in an era when the doctrines of his faith were assailed, he would have been among the foremost of the champions of the truth, using both the spear and the sword. He did not know what it was to turn his back upon duty. He always faced it, and was as immovable as the everlasting hills. No one was more charitable than he. He had no bigotry in his make. He recognized and fellowshipped goodness wherever he found it. He was a man of broad views, of liberal impulses, of generous emotions, but of a fixed and determined purpose. His face was set like a flint to serve the Lord, and nothing could divert him. He was true to Him as the magnet is to the pole. No fear of man, no flattery, no temporizing considerations, ever caused him to waver in the least from his great purpose to be a servant of Christ.

I call this *courage*. On the battle-field it makes a Grant or Wellington; wherever the rack and the stake were used, it makes a Cranmer or Ridley; in times of reform, a Luther or a Melancthon. All that was needed was the occasion to cause the virtue to stand out in bas-relief in his life. It existed, and had ambition or self-conceit co-existed with it, they would have created opportunities for its display. As it was, modesty, reserve, diffidence, held him to a calm, unpretentious, humble, unostentatious use of his powers, not for the glory of self, but for the honor of God and the good of man. "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." Dr. Foster did this. The true hero was in him, peering out in every sermon or lecture, yet never making any display.

Another thing to be said about Dr. Foster is, that he had the genius of labor. "The labor we delight in physics pain." Dr. Foster took that physic freely. But he was not singular in this. Genius is often only a power to labor. In the life of

Horace Mann are the words: "From the time when I accepted the secretaryship, in June, 1837, until May, 1848, when I tendered my resignation of it, I labored in this cause [the cause of public education] an average of not less than fifteen hours a day; from the beginning to the end of this period, I never took a single day for relaxation, and months and months together passed without my withdrawing a single evening from working hours to call upon a friend." That is the way in which a great man worked. Mr. Gladstone is an unwearied and incessant toiler. Nothing comes to him by intuition. He illustrates the old proverb, *Omnia labori dant Dei*. You had only to hear one of Dr. Foster's sermons or lectures to be impressed with the pains which he bestowed upon everything. If you went into his study you would see evidences of toil on every hand. I am not aware that he had any specialty in the line of his work. He did not stand out with great prominence among his brethren as an exegete in biblical studies, nor was he marked as a logician, nor as a metaphysician, nor as a student of the original languages of the Bible; but he rather combined a degree of excellence in all these departments, with a marvelous general knowledge, and permeated and suffused the whole with an extraordinary zeal, an affluence of speech, and an ornament of rhetoric, which made him to be one of the most eloquent of modern pulpit orators. I do not think he ever did anything for effect or for show. His ruling purpose in everything was to do his work well for the good it might do. He said he often trembled for himself when he was to address hundreds of immortal souls on themes affecting their eternal interests, and he had made so imperfect preparation for it. He realized the importance of right words as well as right thoughts. He labored that he might be a workman who, in the world to come, when he will stand face to face with his work, might not be ashamed.

Dr. Foster spent very little time, perhaps not enough for his relaxation and health, in social life. He was no ascetic in spirit; he was not morose, not a censtrer; he simply could not, as he thought, in view of the limitations placed upon him

by imperfect health, spare the time. He felt the presence of his work. It was a stupendous thing which he was doing every week, preparing a message to be delivered to souls who might never hear the Gospel again. This so weighed upon him that he could not take for pleasure any time from the desk when his work was being done.

God gave him a robust frame, and one of the best constitutions that ever mortal man had, or he would have been crushed under his labors many years earlier than he was. He put his whole life as well as his time into his work. Like Paul he could say: "This *one* thing I do."

His work is done; yes, *well* done. His reward is complete. He was faithful in the trust committed to him, and he has heard the Master's word of approval. The crown of eternal life is his. That aching heart is at rest; those twinging nerves no longer agonize with pain, but thrill with joy; the heart that beat so feebly here, is steady and strong in its pulsations now; earth, with all its anxieties, fears, troubles, toils, has done with him, and he is now in heaven, before the Father's throne, in the society of Jesus whom he loved and served, with the ransomed throng who sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. There we can leave him, with the hope that when the time of our departure comes we may meet him in the heavenly land, and have communion with him forevermore.

SELECTED
ADDRESSES AND SERMONS,

DELIVERED BY

REV. EDEN B. FOSTER, D. D.

THE ELOQUENCE OF EXPIRING NATIONS.

[The following address was delivered by Dr. Foster at his graduation from Dartmouth College in 1837. He was then, it will be observed, twenty-four years old. Reference to this address is made in the Biographical Sketch on page 36. The address is inserted as an interesting illustration of the fact, that by the time a young man leaves college his faculties are substantially developed, and he is tolerably certain to display the same qualities that will characterize him in after life. We find in this Commencement address the same methods of treatment and the same graces of style which marked Dr. Foster's compositions in after years.]

DEATH himself is eloquent. But not only does he reason eloquently himself; he imparts to his victims a spirit and power of eloquence rarely attained in days of health. It is not the individual alone whose expiring moments are characterized by vividness and reach of conception, by depth of emotion, and by propriety of expression, unknown before. The intellect of nations is endowed at the last with extraordinary energy and sagacity; the national sensibility is highly excited, and, at such a crisis, men are seldom wanting who can give that intellect and that sensibility tongue.

If adversity falling upon the individual demands the highest human powers to conceive the momentous results and to depict the consequent evils, surely when nations are approaching the devouring whirlpool, where myriads of men will be swallowed up, it needs an angel's capacity either to perceive or to make known the amount of woe. If those highly-gifted men, who sometimes appear on this troubled theatre, may be supposed ever to exert supernatural energies, it is when their beloved country, their own fellow-citizens, comprising the partakers of their blood, the friends of their heart, the children of

their love, are sucked within the resistless eddy, and are gliding swiftly and fearfully on towards the overwhelming vortex. They may hope for rescue, for hope leaves us but with life. In the vehement workings of their minds, they devise ways of escape, and urge them upon the attention of others with address and ability which despair alone could originate. They put forth powers of persuasion which would have been entirely beyond their reach at a moment of less intense excitement; even as the leader of an army who is on the battle-field in the midst of circling foes, liable to be borne down by numbers, and sensible that the fate of his soldiers depends upon his own, with his red right hand, now nerved with tremendous power, hews his way through opposing ranks, dashes aside the closing combatants, and escapes by means of sheer strength, which at any other time he could not have exerted.

It is in times of serious disaster that the great men of a country are most abundant, most energetic, most impressive. The eloquence of a nation is a compound made up of the various kinds of eloquence which distinguish the addresses of its eminent men. A single individual, however remarkable for superiority of discourse, seldom if ever exhibits all the qualities which go to form a perfect model of human eloquence. A nation may contain, at the same time, different men in whom are to be found all these qualities; and if any period of its existence is more likely than another to produce such men, it is the period of its downfall. There are then exciting causes sufficient to rouse the orator's utmost energies. His liberty, his life, his friends, his country, are in danger. There is a feeling of apprehension abroad. It communicates from mind to mind, it grows in intensity, and it kindles in many a bosom a flame of indignation which ere long bursts forth bright and scorching. A man is eloquent when he makes you feel, but he must feel himself,—he must feel the inspiration of important, appropriate thought, the working of true and deep emotion. Occasions do not often happen, even in the lapse of ages, in which either individuals or nations are wrought up to the highest pitch of feeling and of mental action. It is only

during periods of violent commotion, when all is at stake and a people are conscious that they must do or die, that we may look for the most powerful and impressive eloquence. When the sovereignty of Greece was no more, when apathy had fallen upon her people and luxury upon her palaces, when her love for letters and science and art was passing away, Demosthenes appeared, fervid in spirit, patriotic in design, discerning in thought, lucid in style, bold in denunciation, pungent in satire, vehement in utterance. The Roman republic fell by the machinations of ambitious and dissolute men; and by the same fratricidal hands was shed the blood of Cicero, the most renowned orator of the Eternal City, her glory, and, more than once, her defence.

The eloquence of expiring nations has its distinctive features. Among them are sincerity, earnestness, and condensation. When a man is pleading in a capital cause, and that the cause of a whole people, he eschews all banter, all trifling, all digressions. Grief, anxiety, and determination displace every minor emotion. Every power of mind, every energy of feeling, every acquisition of experience and study, is brought to bear, in devising and enforcing plans for safety. He cannot be insincere, for his own welfare is identified with that of the nation. He cannot be lukewarm, for his dearest rights and privileges are exposed to destruction. He cannot be tedious, for he turns with disgust from even the slightest observation or superfluous allusion, which may hinder his swift and undeviating advance towards the object in view. He hunts not for flowers nor tinsel decorations; he seeks only the substantial, the pertinent, the efficient. Every word bears upon the point at issue, and is fraught with the weightiest truth.

When the events of society are at rest, or where oppression fetters the mind and restrains discussion, there is little opportunity for the display of true eloquence. The patriot may mourn in secret over the ignorance, the degradation, the supineness, the wrongs of his countrymen, but it avails not to utter his griefs aloud. The philosopher silently stores his

mind with truth, and pushes his inquiries farther into the undiscovered regions of science; but he has few facilities for spreading knowledge abroad and speaking forth its praise. If he possess an enthusiastic temperament and enlarged views respecting man's capabilities for improvement, he may converse privately with animation and effect, and, provided he can procure an enlightened, attentive audience, he may convey instruction and entertainment; but at such times the philosopher cannot interest the multitude. He calls upon them to think, and they shrink from the task. They are too much engrossed by the calls of business and the pleasures of sense, to attend to the exhortations of him who would lead them to seek first mental and moral excellence. They fail to comprehend and appreciate his ideas. They are not familiar with the words used as signs of thought, and they cannot understand his meaning. Hence he labors under great disadvantages. He can catch no ardor from their countenances, no encouragement from their subsequent actions. A man cannot be eloquent if speaking to stocks and stones. Even if he speaks to an assembly of educated, contemplative men, who can enter into all his views and who admit the vital importance of intellectual cultivation, the nature of his subject confines him to abstract precepts and general principles.

When the constitution of a state is trampled upon; when despots begin to grind the faces of those who were once free, or anarchy comes in like a flood; when corruption twines its serpent folds around every limb of the body politic, and diffuses its venom through all the life-blood; when civil broils and disregard of law prevail; when fraud, injustice, licentiousness, violence, and murder stalk abroad through the land, foretokening the speedy sundering of all social ties, the rapid approach of Barbarism and Moral Night, announcing with unerring certainty that "*Mene, Mene,*" is written by a bodiless hand, and that thralldom, mental, moral, and civil, is the nation's inevitable portion, — then it is that some son of the degenerate soil starts up, girt with strength, pure in the midst of pollution, eagle-eyed where all else are blind, and with a heart full of

fearful foreboding for his native land, but with a determined purpose to devote himself for his country, and save her, or be crushed in her ruins, erects the standard of reform, spreads abroad the banner of truth, and, with self-denying, unremitted zeal, endeavors to rally around that standard and under those folds a band of co-workers in the great design of regenerating the government and the people. He lifts up his voice like a trumpet, and sounds a startling alarm. He adjures his countrymen by the memory of their former glory, of their days of valor, magnanimity, virtue, and prosperity, by the memory of the deeds of their ancestors, and by the thought of the destinies of their children, to pause, to renounce their madness, and to retrace their steps. And though his warning voice be disregarded, though it fail to stay the tide of desolation, yet it will ring in the ears of the devoted nation till the last gasp, and its echoes will then be heard in other lands.

THE DULL SCHOLAR:

AN ADDRESS TO TEACHERS.

[The following address was delivered repeatedly at Teachers' Institutes throughout Massachusetts. Some mention of its preparation and of the circumstances under which it and kindred addresses were delivered, may be found on page 119 of the Biographical Sketch. Dr. Foster was an ardent student of biography, deeply in sympathy with child-life, and a warm friend of education. All these facts in his character find abundant illustration in the essay given below. The address, with suitable modifications, was once delivered from the pulpit as a sermon, from the text in Exodus 2 : 9: "Take this child away and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." Dr. Foster took a wide range in his pulpit, and regarded a sermon to parents on the education of their children, such as he made out of this address, as entirely appropriate.]

How shall the teacher educate the dull scholar?

I. Educate the indifferent child as much as possible *through the agency of his senses*. He has not yet reached the age for introversion of thought and for deep reflection. The faculties of perception are active; the faculties of meditation are dormant. He is quick to see and admire the forms of proportion and order, quick to hear and appreciate the sounds of melody. Knowledge comes into the mind through the eye with a speed like that of the rays of light as they glance from star to star. The eye has a wider circle of observation than any of the other senses, and it seems to be more directly and emphatically the instrument of the soul. How little can you learn of the bird from its song, or of the sheep from its bleat, or of any irrational creature from the utterances of its voice, compared with the knowledge secured by careful scrutiny with the eye. And when you come to the inanimate creation, where there are only inarticulate murmurs of winds, and rus-

ling of leaves, and gurgling of brooks, and dashing of waves, all other methods of investigation are without efficacy compared to the searchings of the eye. Instruct the child by diagrams; attract his attention by pictures; imprint truth upon his memory by the distinct impressions of outward form. Stimulate the mind, arouse emotion, by something of the same philosophy which leads the Romanist to use imposing ceremonies and scenic representations for the purposes of his religion. He may pervert the doctrines of Scripture, and may make the form an auxiliary of error and superstition. The teacher has all the power which the Romanist so ingeniously uses, and he employs it for the victories of science, and for stirring the higher faculties of the youthful mind.

It is well for us, in the school and in the family, having the great instrument of human language and the mysterious power of human speech, to pour thoughts into the soul through the ear; but after all, there is no knowledge so vivid as that which the eye conveys. It is impossible for the blind child to learn as rapidly and as accurately as other children can; and it is only after the round of science has been run, and the faculty of meditation takes the place of the faculty of observation, as in the case of Milton, of Prescott, of Milburn, that the agency of the eye can be lost without irreparable disaster to the progress of mind. There are certain barbarous tribes who fasten the plow to the horns of the ox, not adjusting the harness to the neck and shoulders, not placing the draft where the muscular strength lies. We are in danger of committing a similar mistake in the instruction of our children, appealing to those faculties which are not natural to their age, and which cannot yet be aroused without a dangerous precocity. We teach them abstractions, when we should bring before them concrete truths; we attempt to be logical and profound, when we should use simple illustration and personification; we attempt to make their judgment mature, and to build up in their mind a system of propositions and of proofs, when their perceptions have not yet collected the necessary facts, and their memory has not accumulated its store of rudimental

truths, and their intuitive consciousness has not been roused to action. As well might you ask the chrysalis to soar in air before it is changed into the butterfly. Follow the order of nature. Appeal to the senses of the child. First, the great facts of the world, which are potent to every eye; then the laws and relations of things. First, the observation and the memory; then the inward reflection and the higher reason.

It has sometimes been thought a very great wonder, that men like Patrick Henry, seemingly listless for years, roaming in the woods, idling in the fields, lolling in the garden, should spring suddenly, and to all beholders unexpectedly, to the very front rank of the illustrious thinkers and speakers of the age. Is not this the explanation? They had used the eye and the ear to some purpose. They had developed their faculties by the simple, natural process which God appoints. They had looked into the book of creation. They had heard the harmonies of nature. They had been observant of men. They lived at an hour when histories were transacted. They had listened to conversations and discussions. When earnest reflection came, it came not through the usual agencies of schools and of books, but it came like the gushing fountain from the hill-side, with spontaneous, outbursting, irresistible force. Thomas Lord Erskine was educated by the prairies of America in his military campaigns; Rev. Dr. Ellery Channing was educated by the surges of the sounding sea; Daniel Webster was educated by the sombre darkness and the rugged crags of the Salisbury mountains. If such men have the culture of the higher schools and the college, it is all the better; but it is this education of the child, bringing out his faculties in the order which God appoints, giving to his thoughts the vividness, the impressiveness, and the energy which the teachings of nature secure, which more than aught else is the secret of his genius and of his ultimate power. Let the teacher have the sagacity to be a co-worker with nature here. Teach geography by globes, by maps, by blackboard drawings; as far as possible, teach it by the round world itself. So of other elementary sciences,—make all knowledge plain by some form or other of illustration.

I have sometimes entered a school, and been distressed by the dull inattention and the apparent incapacity of the scholars. The lesson was an important one, the teacher seemed to understand it, you would suppose the child ought to know it; but blank faces, inconsequent answers, or utter silence, were all the responses to the questions proposed. I have been into the same school a second time, under another teacher and under a different system of instruction, and have been utterly surprised to see those stupid scholars making easy and rapid progress in their studies. Those blank faces were lighted with thought; those sluggish forms were alert with action; those dumb tongues were vocal with quick and accurate replies. What was the cause? The teacher did not love children any better; the teacher did not understand science any better; the teacher had not any larger gifts. But a new avenue had been found to the child's understanding. By object lessons, by illustrative methods of communicating truth, by simplicity and clearness of explanation, by a magnetic enthusiasm imparted from the teacher to the child, the scholar was waked up. He was asleep before; he was alive and in earnest now. This is the chief benefit of foreign travel. The student visiting other countries, studying monuments of art, meditating on battle-fields, gazing on the broad lake and the towering mountain, witnessing unaccustomed habits of society, beholding the conduct of different classes of men, is not acquiring knowledge unknown to scholars before, never recorded in books, never recited in human ears, but he is acquiring knowledge by methods to which he had been unused. He learns by the eye, by the ear, by every sense. The body becomes the facile instrument of the soul, the eager auxiliary of the mind. He gains not only a new sensation, but unwonted avenues of thought are opened, by which knowledge easily enters the mind, and deeply stamps itself upon the memory and the heart.

When John Adams went to France as ambassador of the new Republic, he took with him his son, John Quincy, a boy ten years of age. He employed in Paris the most accomplished instructor he could find to teach himself the French

language. He spent long sessions of every day in earnest and absorbing study, to prepare himself to converse in their own vernacular with foreign statesmen. He had shorter and more careless lessons given to his son, and then allowed him, during the larger part of each day, to associate with French boys, and play and talk and idle away the hours with them. The boy learned the French tongue far more rapidly than the father, not because he had any more genius, not because he studied any harder (he did not study half so much), but because eye and ear and every sense were helping him to learn; because a thousand outward objects were arresting his attention, and he was giving to them names; because the memory of the child is developed before his reasoning faculties, and that is the hour for learning a language. Now the teacher, who by skilful arrangements and by ingenious contrivances can come the nearest to the methods by which John Quincy Adams learned the French language, the nearest to means similar to those by which the foreign tourist acquires information, will be most likely to rouse up the dull minds of lethargic children, and to bring the school into a condition of intense love for study. It is not a vain thing for even a common school to have some philosophical apparatus by which to explain the simple laws of nature. A microscope to examine insects, a telescope to look at stars, a prism to distinguish colors, an orrery to represent the system of the heavens, blackboard and chalk, slate and pencil, paper and pen, many other devices by which invisible thought is painted to the eye and thus pictured to the memory, are of untold advantage in the school-room. I would not have all this delicate machinery exposed to the rough and careless hands of the scholars whenever they choose, but let the use of the apparatus be the reward of studiousness. Let it be assigned to certain half-days. Let it be at the teacher's command to elucidate an unexpected difficulty, or to banish an inexplicable lethargy, and the school-room would soon become a more fascinating place to the scholar than any shops of gewgaws, than any circus or buffoonery, or any theatre or tragedy.

II. To interest dull children, *appeal to the imagination*, that faculty which searches through heaven and earth for knowledge and thought; through the past and the present for motive and aim; through all experiences of soul and life for stimulus and reward. The imagination is very likely to rove after forbidden objects. The mind has a natural tendency, especially in childhood, to reverie and day-dreams, and oftentimes it indulges in anticipations which have no basis in reason and can have no realization in fact. Repress these vain imaginations, and lead the mind of the child to sober thought and rational expectations, otherwise it will be an eccentric and unbalanced mind, no matter what gifts it may possess, or brilliancy of occasional accomplishment it may acquire.

We live in a century of revolution, of independent thinking, of wild adventure. Dull children, who are not eager in sports, who are not rapid in study, who seem to have their faculties chained by inattention and listlessness, are sometimes greatly occupied with their own silent and concealed thoughts. They are brooding over plans of which their friends know nothing; they are adopting projects and resolves which will suddenly burst forth into light and into execution with tremendous energy. It is of the last importance that they should obtain discipline and self-control; that they should see the necessity of thorough and protracted study to any great accomplishment; that they should see the relations between virtue and usefulness. Otherwise they will follow the guidance of some foolish fancy, and rush into passion and folly; they will spend their strength vainly in extravagant schemes; they will waste their life in reveries and dreams, in projects commenced but never ended, in hopes cherished but never fulfilled. We are surrounded by multiplied productions of fiction and fancy. Deep foundations are loosed; ancient opinions are doubted; old establishments are weakened. Revolutions were never so rapid nor so abundant. Doctrines of religion, doctrines of morals, doctrines of politics, are to ten thousand minds uncertain and changeable, like the waxing

and waning moon, like the glimmer of the northern aurora, not like the fixed stars, not like the morning sun. There is a fictitious literature sweeping over the land in floods, confusing the minds of our youth with regard to right and wrong; with regard to good and evil; with regard to the claims of a sensual or of a spiritual life. I deem it, therefore, one of the most solemn obligations resting upon the parent, to guide aright the imagination of his child. Kindle the imagination of the apathetic child with love, and hope, and high aspiration. Let that child read the biographies of good men and good women; let that child be familiar with the parables of Christ and with the stories of the Bible; let that child become interested in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. The mind that is eager and restless and spiritual will build its air castles; let it voyage to the Isle of France with Harriet Newell; let it labor in the provinces of Burmah with Adoniram Judson; let it roam through the romantic scenes of India with Reginald Heber; let it journey with Christiana and her children, guarded by the invincible Great-heart; let it hunt for golden gardens and fairy palaces of splendor with Aladdin's lamp; let it find some supernatural builder of boats, or huts by the sea, or wigwams on the mountain, or caverns in some distant isle. Only let the imagination feed on pure thought, and refined sentiment, and heroic achievement. Let the imagination take its flights, only let them be pure flights; let the inventive talent form its theories, only let them be founded on principles of science and on absolute fact; let the adventurous spirit surround itself with new relations and startling wonders, only let the disinterested aims of love and religion guide in all those imaginary adventures. It cannot harm the child to dream as James Watt dreamed, watching the tea-kettle lid and the tea-kettle spout; holding first the spoon, next the shingle, next the piece of ice, over the nose of the kettle, in the current of steam; studying out the condensing force of different appliances, —until his grandmother rebuked him sharply, as one of the most idle and stupid of all boys. She had not the most distant glimpse of the mighty locomotive on the railroad; of the

swift steamship on the sea ; of the sublime energy in the mills, to which the boy's mind was leading. The boy himself had no distinct conception of the wonders to which the hand of God was conducting him ; still his meditative, dreamy, anxious thoughts, disinclining him to the plays and pleasures of the child, unfitting him for the superficial studies to which other children were devoted, leading him to plunge into the deep reason of things, and into the solution of difficult problems, was one of the direct and beneficent gifts of God.

We have passed out of the age of stone and iron, out of the age of unprofitable occupations and humdrum fancies, into the age of cotton and of corn, of petroleum and of gold, of romance and achievement, of multiplied discoveries and rapid accumulation. We no longer go to the arctic whales for oil ; we find it in the black anthracite, we pump it out of the ground. We no longer go to the Birmingham mills for calicos and carpets, nor to the Sheffield cutlers for knives ; the Whitney machine cleanses our cotton ; the clipping machine cuts our wool ; the looms of improved patterns weave our cloths ; the corn-planter sows our seed ; the cultivator, the mowing-machine, the reaper, almost without the use of human fingers, take care of and gather in the grain. We have lands of inexhaustible fertility ; we have all materials for mechanic ingenuity ; we have all facilities for manufacturing success ; we have all provocation and helps for progress in invention and in art. The main thing needed now is to quicken and guide the youthful mind.

The world is not old ; it is made new every morning and every night. Leaves are as symmetrical, flowers are as beautiful, valleys are as diversified, mountains are as sublime, as when sunshine first burst forth upon the world after the Deluge. We have explorers and inventors, and the high rules of scientific progress ; we have ethics, and metaphysics, and the profound principles of disinterested love ; we have pure morals and Christian doctrine, and the great foundations of a Christian life. There are equivalents between the ages past and the ages present ; there are compensations for losses and

deficiencies in such a land as ours. If we have not the culture of the old Greek, in all the nicer arts; if we have not the finish and the equipoise found among the titled classes of Europe, — we have an independence and vigor, we have a sentiment of heroism and of accomplishment, we have a richness of youthful intellect and of ardent action; we have an outreaching inquisitiveness of mind, searching after discoveries; we have an innate self-reliance, poised on our own integrity and strength, — which are more than a substitute for the thousand years which England, and France, and Germany have lived. Is there not here room for aspiration and for hope? Cultivate these sentiments in your children. Let Imagination uncover its wing, and take an eagle's flight; let Hope nourish itself with Christian food, and the life of your children shall not be in vain; let us give a larger play to Invention and Genius; let us seek for a well-balanced and a well-disciplined imagination; let Thought no longer lie fettered in the chains of sloth; let Discovery and Invention no longer hibernate in the dark dens of Ignorance; let not the lack of opportunity, and the lack of encouragement, and the lack of religious awakening, keep those faculties in dormant stupidity, which might rise into brilliant knowledge and eminent usefulness. Berzelius, the great Swedish chemist, went forth from the school to the university with this recommendation of his teacher: "Indifferent in behavior, of doubtful hope." If he had not found a more appreciating professor and a higher stimulus, the crucible would have had for him no decomposing power, to separate the oxygen from the hydrogen; the blow-pipe would have had no illuminating energy, to show how steel and iron will burn. William Cowper was persecuted by the malignant tyranny of a wicked boy who sat by his side in school. He was pinched and beaten and kicked and insulted and tortured, until, in the early feebleness of his physical constitution, it seemed as if he must die. He outlived the torment, but he was a sufferer all his days from timidity and the nervous depression thus inspired. He could not face his fellow-men in any public duty; he could not enlarge the circle of his acquaintance

with any comfort or hope; he could only whisper his prayers in secret, and meditate his poems in silence, and write his letters in deep retirement, and show, behind the veil of distance, the beautiful soul which otherwise might have glittered like a star on the brow of national fame. Repress not the courage of the child. Awaken his hope; kindle his imagination; reveal to him the inexhaustible wealth of science; show to him the inimitable beauty of virtue; inspire him with a determination to excel.

III. In order to awaken and advance dull children, *study the bent of their mind*, ascertain if possible the providences which indicate their future destiny, and let the efforts of the teacher work in the same line of results with the indications of Nature. It is usually a vain thing to resist Nature; it is always a laborious and a painful process to obliterate intellectual propensities and to impart new desires. Washington Irving tried very hard to make of himself a merchant; he did not succeed; his tendencies were all to the *belles-lettres*. John Foster attempted to acquire a flashy, popular style of writing; it was a vain effort; his mind was cast in the mold of the metaphysician; he could not get away from his deep speculations; he could not become intelligible to the majority of his audience. Robert Hall was sent, when a little child, with his nurse, to the fields around the cemetery, to divert his mind from thoughtfulness and to invigorate his feeble frame; before his parents or friends knew it, he had learned to read from the letters and sentences on the grave-stones; and when in his childish sports he was dividing the property with his brothers, his proposal was, "You take the land and the cows and the sheep, and I will take the books." It is neither wise nor kind to thwart such propensities as these, and oftentimes, under a timid and uninteresting demeanor, when the mind seems to be slumbering in stupidity, you will find these or similar propensities, if you search for them, in strong and ineradicable force. I know it is sometimes said that we should seek to cultivate the faculties in which we are deficient, and thus secure a mental balance. If a child has no taste for the

languages, put him into Greek and Latin, and make him dig at ancient roots from week to week and year to year. If a child does not love mathematics, compel him to study arithmetic and algebra. I am well aware that there is a system of elementary and disciplinary study necessary to train the mind up to comprehensiveness, symmetry, and strength. I know that all educational experiments, both in the college and the school, prove that if any mind has any special gift, constituting genius, still it is better for that mind to take a wide curriculum of study, and to secure for itself a thorough preliminary discipline. The power of the special gift will be all the more remarkable, because the faculties have been developed in due proportion, and the mind, as a whole and inseparable organism, has been invigorated. The history of scholars proves beyond a doubt that he who would excel in any specific line of action, whether as lawyer, physician, or minister, whether as painter, sculptor, or poet, whether as engineer, statesman, or architect, had better discipline and perfect his mind by a complete course of academical study.

But the point at which I now aim is this: How shall you arouse the enthusiasm of the dull child? It may be that he has no hidden faculties nor dormant strength, and that he is ordained to be dull as long as he lives; but you ought not to take this for granted. The soul is formed of God to be educated, and to assume an unexpected and mighty power in the course of its education. You might as well say that the young bird just hatched will never fly, because it has no wings, as that the young child will never clearly understand and sublimely reason, because he seems to be involved in thoughtless lethargy or in confused bewilderment now. It is his nature to think and to learn; it is his destiny to progress and to reason. Development is the law of his being. It is his privilege to aspire after science and even genius. The parent does expect his child to unfold larger faculties; the teacher ought to expect it of every one under his charge, and to labor for it. The child who remains all his life-time a stupid, indolent ignoramus, is a monstrosity, and not a legitimate

specimen of human nature, or otherwise he is a most unfortunate being, hindered by circumstances, cut off from privileges, his intellectual impulses crushed out by vices, or checked by false theories, or thwarted by misguided friends. Let the teacher act on the firm belief that every child, if rightly guided, may make rapid progress in knowledge. There may be opposing influences in society, or in the home or in the habits of the child, which cannot be overcome; but let this be the expectation, that the child will learn, and this the purpose, to help it to learn.

In order to render the right aid and stimulus to the child, *study his biases*; learn the bent of his genius; explore the secret springs of his intellectual desire. "My boy," said a discerning teacher to a lad in his school, "I am sorry to see you marking and disfiguring your book, but some of these pictures are very skilfully made; if you will come to me one hour every evening, I will teach you to draw and paint, and then I think you will find a new interest in your other studies." He had been a listless and even reckless lad, wasting all his hours; but the kind tone and the opportune encouragement, striking upon the hidden impulses which God had planted in his soul, made of him a superior scholar and an eminent artist.

It would have been as difficult and as cruel to prevent Lucretia Davidson, or her sister Margaret, from writing poetry, as to fetter the wings of the bird that it might not fly, or to muzzle its bill that it might not sing; and all successful efforts to educate such minds must follow the promptings of nature, rather than seek to obliterate them.

It may be the misfortune, or it may be the sin, of the parent, that he does not understand the tendencies of his own child. With some it is a misfortune. They have never been educated themselves, and how shall they educate others? They have never studied human nature, so as to know what qualities of character are indicated by certain symptoms; the whole diagnosis of mental health or mental disease is to them a perfect mystery. They have not been trained in any school,

whether of science or of practical life, to careful observation, or to critical analysis, or to logical thought. They do not understand their own consciousness; how shall they read the inner soul of their children? They took upon them the responsibilities of a family, without a glimpse of the infinite grandeur of the relationship they were to bear to immortal souls, and now they are not prepared to discern the biases, or the capabilities, or the wants of the child; or if they do discern them, they are not prepared to counsel and guide the child in wisdom's ways. It is their misfortune and not their fault. With other parents this ignorance and inability are a sin. They have the education necessary to comprehend their children's idiosyncrasy, and to lead them thoughtfully and surely in paths of improvement. But they are apathetic; they are lovers of ease; they are absorbed in worldly cares; they are unmindful of their eternal accountability; they do not rouse themselves to a sense of obligation and of privilege, so as to lead their children up to those heights of exaltation and usefulness where they might assuredly see them stand. It is on their part criminal neglect, and their children are the most unfortunate of all human creatures. Better to be the child of a heathen, and have a heathen's doom, than to be the child of an educated, strong-minded citizen of a Christian country, who carelessly or recklessly leaves his offspring to go down from the summits of privilege to the depths of ignorance and moral wreck. But the common-school teacher, making it his business to study the character of the young, consecrating himself to the work of education, ought to know what are the intellectual tendencies of the children whom he instructs, and he ought to avail himself of that knowledge, for the welfare of dull children, who are of a desponding temperament, who have been surrounded by adverse circumstances, who are in feeble health, or who, it may be, have never had the grandeur of their privilege or the measure of their capability set before them. Some of the best minds of the world, touched to the finest issues, are most inclined to self-distrust and to overpowering fear. Rev. Dr. Nathaniel Taylor, late of New Haven,

when a student in Yale College, lost his health, and fell back three years. He says, "When I came the last time (for I entered three different classes), it was rather to gratify my parents than with any expectation or intention of being a scholar. Though I had previously felt an intense interest in study, I had by that time entirely lost it—I had abandoned the thought of either doing or being much in future life." It was the stimulating counsels of President Dwight that kept him on. Even after he had studied theology and been licensed to preach, it was the encouraging words of Dr. Dwight that emboldened him to accept the call which he received to the New Haven church. Dr. Dwight said to him, "You do not know what you can do. No young man of even respectable talents knows what he can do, and hence, in many cases, they do so little. Believe me, I have no fears of the issue, and I know much better what you can do than you know yourself." "Dr. Dwight," says Dr. Taylor, "inspired me with cheerful courage, and I succeeded in making efforts which otherwise I could not have made. After a while I got over these fits of despondency, and no one can tell how much I owe to him for it."

By similar methods of sagacity and of love, every common-school teacher, and every academy teacher, may search out some minds that need his words of sympathy, guidance, praise; and his influence over that child or youth may be the means, under God, not only of rescuing a soul from apathy and despair, but of kindling a bright and permanent light that shall shine for the land and for the world. It is well for the teacher to remember that there are often great designs of infinite wisdom hidden under the dark providences of God. The child of delicate and feeble frame, soon exhausted by labor, soon weary of study, nervous, afflicted with pains, it may be, will soon be called to heaven, there to cast off the shattered tabernacle of flesh; there to rise above the incumbrances and disabilities of earth; there to investigate science with more than Miltonic powers. It will be a comfort to the teacher, when that child is laid in the grave, to know that he was careful not

to break the already bruised reed; that he dealt charitably, tenderly, with the one whom God had smitten. That child of delicate structure may ripen into manly strength, and may outlive and outwork the robust and the energetic. The child of physical infirmity may find the outward disability only a source of mental quickening and of inward light. Walter Scott was a lame boy from his childhood up; but he was cut off from the coarse sports and degrading pleasures of other children. He was sent to the country, to be fed on milk and air. His soul was nurtured by the scenery of mountains; by the silence of meditation; by the reading of history and poems; by the tutorship of a thoughtful and loving woman, the sister of his mother, and thus it was that the cripple in limbs became a giant in mind.

The child who seems now dull and impassive, hardly to be startled out of his lethargy by any exhibition of truth, or by any stimulus of motive, may be gathering force, in the mysterious processes of the mind, for a future energy and accomplishment that shall surprise the world. It is not always the precocious who do the most for the advancement of science. The mind of silence and inaction may suddenly develop an unexpected power. The rock must be struck by the rod of Moses, or it will not give forth its exhaustless streams. The gifted musician, the born painter, the natural poet, the profound philosopher, is not likely to know his power, till some strain of harmony, some magic picture, some thrilling appeal to the imagination, some powerful principle of ethical reasoning, has swept across the chords of his soul, as the wind sweeps the *Æolian* harp. God's power must awaken the sluggish mind. Some opportune voice of education, or art, or religion, or nature, must speak to the responses of the inward soul, before those dormant, mysterious faculties will spring into life. Sir Humphrey Davy was thought to be a very stupid boy, but the grand science of chemistry was waiting for him, and he for that; and through the darkness and hopelessness of his childhood, could still be discerned, by the true seer, the distant glimmer of that lamp, which should be carried safely

through all inflammable gases and all subterranean mines. Rev. Dr. Thomas Scott could not write a composition at the age of twelve years, and on account of his supposed stupidity his father chose him to do the most degrading drudgery of the farm; nevertheless, in that brain, under God, were hidden those voluminous and most instructive commentaries which have filled the world with religious light. From all history, and from all biographies, comes the admonition to the discerning teacher, Do not harshly repel, do not thoughtlessly discourage, the dull and undemonstrative child. If the child be depressed by fear, or unmoved by thought, do not lay any additional burden on that soul, but supply encouragement and hope. Point the mind to the grandeur of intellectual attainment, and to the progressive steps by which knowledge is to be reached. Uncover and kindle the glowing coal, so long hidden in the ashes. Polish the rough diamond which you have found in the ore. Invoke, for your help, the grace of God, and you shall find that the mind, which God has created for improvement, has elastic force, and cannot be buried in torpor and secularities; that the soul which God has formed for immortality and redeemed for his own alliance, will rise with irrepressible expansion to its lofty eminence.

READING.

[This address on Reading was originally prepared for delivery at the Bradford (Mass.) Female Seminary. It was subsequently given at Miss Gilman's School in Chester Square, Boston. It was also one of the addresses most frequently used by Dr. Foster at Teachers' Institutes. He likewise introduced it as one of his sermons in his course on the Family, as preached at West Springfield and Lowell. In this use of the manuscript, he modified it considerably, entitled his discussion "Literary Culture in the Home," and chose as a text, 1 Tim. 4:13, "Give attendance to reading." Reference to this address is made in the Biographical Sketch on page 119.]

My topic is, "The True Method of Culture by Books," and here I have two divisions of thought, —

- I. The Classification of Books.
- II. The Advantages of Reading.

The first question which I propose is this, What are the books to be read, in order to lead the mind and character up to the highest attainments? A selection becomes the first of all necessities. It is simply impossible to read a half or a hundredth part of the books which are published. It is the age of books. It is the token of the progress of mind and the improvement of society more than all other discoveries. The most important quality and distinction of this people is, it is a reading people. A literary aspiration, to some extent, is awakened in all hearts. This one distinction, more than others, is the foundation of our religion, our liberty, our enterprise, our national strength. Within the memory of those now living, there were only thirty-seven newspapers in the United States; now there are more than twenty-five hundred. The press is unbound, and mind is unchained. Books are multiplied on every subject. A few years ago, two hundred and

fifty sheets an hour was all that a printing-press, worked by hand, could print; now, going by steam, it casts off four thousand per hour. A few years ago a packet-ship crossed the ocean in a month, and in a week after its arrival, the news would be distributed. Now the ocean is crossed in nine or ten days by steamer, in an hour by cable; and events which happen to-day in the British Parliament, or on the European continent, in less than twenty-four hours will be flying on paper wings to all parts of the land. Once it took five years of laborious work of the scribe to prepare a copy of the Bible, and the cost of one was a fortune. Now, copies are printed, thousands per hour, and any man may buy one for the wages of two hours' work. We are universal readers, and we exercise the right of private judgment as universally. There is not a change of cabinet officers in Europe, much less in our own country; not a revolution of opinion; not a war declared; not a battle fought; not a governor elected; not a great question discussed in Congress or Legislature, but in less than a week it is talked over in every log-cabin of the West, in every cottage of New England. All this shows where the sovereignty lodges, and where it ought to lodge. It shows how immense our responsibility for our own education; how vast our privilege, if we improve it. Of course, out of the three thousand papers printed weekly, no one can read more than three or four; out of every three thousand books printed, most of us are not likely to read more than three or four. If there be any education by books, a wise, well-considered, comprehensive system of reading must be adopted. Allow me to give a rapid sketch of certain departments of valuable reading.

I. First of all is the Biblical and Theological. The Bible itself is a mine of intellectual treasures, and more ingots of gold have been dug from it than from all other books and from all human intellects. It would be incredible, and is incredible to all but the accurate student, who has followed the thread of ecclesiastical and scholarly history, to be told how much the Bible has quickened the thoughts of genius, and proved the germ of all literature and learning. Says one of

our greatest authors, "The Bible has proved the origin and first excitement of nearly all the literature and science which we now possess." Of course this book demands your study, not only for the salvation of the soul, but for intellectual force and accomplishment. No person can be educated who is not thoroughly acquainted with the Bible. Its thoughts are divine, all other thoughts are human. Study it thoroughly, and it will unfold in beauty, richness, and glory more and more, and will lift the mind above all feebleness and puerilities. Study it thoroughly, and it will fill the life with the refining influences of intellectual culture and moral elevation. I have included, in this department, theological treatises. Great men, of high and consecrated genius, have left to the world invaluable legacies of Biblical literature. No other department of literature is producing more fresh, and instructive, and impressive works at the present hour. Sermons, essays, treatises of the highest order of thought, and unequalled popularity and power, are appearing. No books are more eagerly and widely read than some of these. I shall not specify particular authors, but I implore you to make the Biblical department one of your most frequent and earnest subjects of study.

II. A second department of reading, which cannot be omitted, is the Historical and Biographical. The most beautiful and fascinating of all histories have been written in the present age. Among them, Hallam, Alison, Macaulay, Carlyle, in England, and Irving, Prescott, Bancroft, Motley, in America, occupy the first rank. If the story of an individual's life be important, how much more the progress and evolution of vast and complicate events on which a nation's existence and prosperity depend! Here may you learn what man is, in all his diverse aspects of genius and imbecility, of knowledge and ignorance, of nobleness and crime. Here will you see the most striking exhibitions of magnanimity and virtue, with their results of joy, and also of vice and degradation, with their consequents of woe. Here may you learn what constitutes political greatness, what dishonors a land, what overthrows a nation's hopes. Here, above all, may you

see the footsteps of the mighty God, now pursuing His counsels in paths of light, and now in paths of mystery; now lifting up the humble and the obedient, bringing unexpected results out of insignificant causes; now inflicting His necessary judgments, and, by the defeat of His foes, advancing His own great designs. God's plans have been moving on through all changes, with slow, yet sure and majestic force, to the accomplishment of His great purposes. In the vivid exhibition of Church History, two foreign authors, D'Aubigné and Neander, stand prominent. And none can read such books intelligently, without an enlargement of knowledge and piety both; without new inducements to trust in God, and to commit all interests into His hands.

It is wonderful to notice how the mind becomes interested and absorbed in those old histories of two hundred and three hundred years ago, which might seem to have passed into the catalogue of obsolete events, and into the limbo of forgetfulness, as much as the bones and fossils of the old primitive formation. And yet it is not so. These annals are as full of life and freshness, as full of instruction, as full of power, as though they had been written but yesterday. Take the history of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the whole wide world was roused out of its sleep by the discovery of America; by the colonization of a new world; by the reconstruction of opinions and the reconstruction of empires. It was not the age of the present popular advancement. But it was the age of adventure, of speculation, of enthusiasm, of resolve, of brilliant, chivalrous exploit. Distinctions of rank were everywhere maintained with a reverence unknown to this century. No republicanism was allowed to profane the presence of aristocratic privilege and power. No commerce, nor inventions, nor mechanical ingenuities, nor even the onward, majestic steppings of science, were permitted to hold an equal career with prerogative, and precedent, and hereditary rank. Yet with all this reluctance to move, and with all this reverence for the past, sometimes obstinate, sometimes

foolish, sometimes insane, there were great reforms. The minds of men were inquiring after a purer religion, a deeper philosophy, a higher republicanism, and better institutions. The art of printing came in. The revival of learning followed. The Lutheran reformation was born. The Papal tyranny was broken down. The Tudor dynasty was established in England. Opinion became more free. A system of popular instruction was adopted. The Bible was read by the common people. Popular rights were guaranteed by jury trial, by *habeas corpus*, by petition of right, by international confederacy. Changes took place which have made England the crown of the world's empires, and the gem of old ocean's isles. Genius was roused out of its centurial slumbers. Freedom broke away from its clanking chains. Civilizations, laws, literatures, sciences, philosophies, had their birth. Then was the commencing movement of that march of mind, which has brought in such remarkable discoveries, and inventions, and energy of enterprise. It is a study of profound and unfailing interest, to mark the progress of such an age.

As to Biography, I cannot begin to enumerate the volumes of value; I cannot begin to describe the varied instruction and power that belong to this species of literature. Take the memoirs of one divine, Payson; of one poet, Cowper; of one teacher, Arnold; of one statesman, Wilberforce; of one missionary, Ann Haseltine Judson. Examine some of the older lives, like Wycliffe, the Lutherworth rector; or John Knox, of Scotland; or Luther, of Germany; or Calvin, of France; or Milton, Hampden, Cromwell, of England;—if any one can read them without elations and depressions, heart-throbbings and high aspirations, he must have a very stupid or a very stoical mind.

III. A third important department of reading is the Poetical. Poetry and allegory and criticism have enlisted a vast amount of genius, and in them have been poured forth imagination and pathos, humor and wit, information and eloquence without stint. I can only mention a few names, without going into

particular characteristics. From Spenser, and Shakespeare, and Milton, the older giants of poetry, to Bryant, and Longfellow, and Whittier, and Lowell, and Tennyson, the last and best of the moderns; from Bacon, and Addison, and Johnson, the older essayists, to Macaulay, and Isaac Taylor, and Rogers, and Bayne, of the moderns, — the range of subjects is vast, and the exhibition of talent is great. These writings appeal to the sense of beauty in art, and the sense of sublimity in thought. They awaken the love of the tender, of the pathetic, of the heroic. They exalt all the faculties of the intellect; they touch and subdue the sensibility of the heart. As a recreation in our hours of weariness; as a comfort under the depressing weight of grief; as a stimulus to the jaded soul, when the wings of the spirit droop; as a joy and hope when inferior pleasures fail, — they are wonderfully efficacious.

I have referred to Shakespeare. I doubt whether he is read now as much as he was by Lyman Beecher, and Francis Wayland, and Daniel Webster, and Rufus Choate, and some of those old giants of divinity and of law. With tendencies to vulgarity, which he borrowed of his age, and which are the one dark spot on this sun-like disk, he has profound conceptions of truth; he has the most accurate views of life and character and history; he has most touching exhibitions of diverse forms of virtue. His deep insight into human nature is unsurpassed. His delineations of home life, and of social life, of love and friendship, of tenderness, pity, scorn, fear, craziness, genius, humor, hate, are unapproachable. His exhibition of courtly and chivalrous and popular manners, is the best history of the times. He gives the truest unfolding of political chicanery, and of noble statesmanship. He gives the most accurate photographs of the motives of the heart, so often misunderstood, so often sedulously concealed. His pictures of woman are of remarkable delicacy and power. There are the ladies of the land, fair and witty and cultured, heroic in suffering and energetic in action, quick in sympathy and abiding in faith, with hearts tender and pitiful and charitable; with great social and even political influence; as

you might suppose of dramas written during the reign of Elizabeth, the most illustrious, the most powerful, the most independent of all the queens of history.

I do not include novels in the list of the miscellanies which I would recommend, for they contain a vast amount of unprofitable reading. They should be read by small selections, and chosen with singular wisdom and sagacity, and the taste for them should be rather repressed than encouraged. For the mind that is given up to them becomes enervated, and loses all relish for the substantial and the pure in literature and thought. Its energies are wasted in dreams, if not dishonored by false ideas of happiness and duty.

I might include, in the designation of the miscellaneous, newspapers. I value them more highly than some who have discoursed about them, and who have derived a good deal of aid from them. You need books of more profound thought and more protracted argument; you need books in which systems are unfolded and principles are defended, and in which the phenomena of nature and of life are traced backward to their causes and forward to their results. Newspapers are necessarily more fragmentary and incoherent. They bring before you facts and separate ideas, which true thinkers must build into form and into harmony. They throw at your feet rough stones from the quarry, to be fashioned by the polisher's hand, — blocks of marble, without apparent relation, to be built by the true architect into the symmetrical edifice. I think very highly of the newspaper as a means of education. In almost every paper that you take into your hands (unless it be given up wholly to the frivolous literature of the day), you will find some significant fact, which is to be inscribed on the page of permanent history; some gem of thought, worthy to be fixed in your memory, and to be set in that enduring circlet of truths, which you are weaving for your eternal joy. I think Fisher Ames' estimate of the newspaper was too low. He said, "It is calculated to throw the general mind into a ferment, and into confusion of thought, and a false excitement of feeling." Better an awakened and even agitated state of pub-

lic sentiment, than dull stagnation. It is the power of the newspaper that it is interesting. It deals with the facts of the hour, with the life of the nation, with all those opinions, discoveries, experiences, which constitute the failure or the progress of society and of institutions; with all those startling and thrilling events, which set men to thinking of the deep problems of duty and destiny, of philosophy and theology.

I would include in this miscellaneous department, as even more important than the newspaper, the literary and religious Reviews, where the strongest thinkers of the times discuss the most pungent questions of the hour. Some of these collected essays, like those of Macaulay, Jeffrey, John Wilson, Talfourd, in England; like those of Whipple, Barnes, Bethune, White, Fisher, Hodge, in our own country, are invaluable. It is said that the late Vice-president Henry Wilson read the whole *North American Review*, from the beginning, — a vast and profound study, a comprehensive science. And this, more than any other education of science or of law, probably, fitted him for his high station. There are other Reviews, more distinctly religious, like the *New Englander*, of New Haven; like the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, of Andover; like Presbyterian, and Baptist, and Methodist Reviews, which I could name, which lift the mind up instantly out of the region of frivolity and triviality and feebleness, into the broad light and vivifying air of scholarly and sacred discussions; where weak intellects soon breathe more vigorously, and where strong intellects find their native food. Here intellect is untrammelled as the wind.

Truth and error have at last found an open field, and in all controversies truth asks no odds. She stands or falls by the strength of her principles and by the power of her blows. We should suppose that in the multitude of books, a large number would fall still-born from the press, and lie unread in libraries. But this does not seem to be the fact. The mind of man has an insatiable curiosity. Like Adam and Eve in the garden, he hungers for evil as well as for good. And like Adam and Eve in the garden, many of our youth, and even many of our adults, are likely to listen to the voice of the be-

guiling serpent, careless whether it be error or truth, if so be it gratify their insatiate desire. There are thousands who are willing to feed upon trash, upon the froth and the foam of a frivolous imagination, the mere whipped syllabub of literature, rather than upon the solid food of divine argument, and of scientific, historic instruction, and of pure and elevating thought. O, that our youth might understand that books are sometimes dangerous;—wicked books, as much as wicked companions; pestilential books, as much as raging cholera; intoxicating books, filled with the atmosphere of false pleasure and false thought, as much as the drunkard's drink, or the suffocating gas of the mines. Let them turn away with loathing from all those books which defend false sentiments, which inspire bad passions, which beguile the imagination into exaggerated views of life. Let parents be on their guard, and faithfully instruct their children, and persuasively influence them, leading them away from bad books. Let all those who have property to build up a library, and culture to understand its value, and power of social influence to caution other minds, beware what books they admit into schools and libraries, and especially into the sacred precincts of the family. As well might you bring ratsbane or strychnine into your house, and take off the label of "Poison," and set it up among your bottles of spices and cordials, as to bring these corrupting volumes into your Sabbath-schools, and your colleges, and your academic seminaries. Beware lest your youth be betrayed before you know the cause, and when it is too late to remedy the evil, into the indulgence of vanity and self-will; into wild and reckless views of life; into the love of pleasure, instead of the love of self-denial; into extravagant vagaries, which only dissipate and enfeeble the mind, instead of that concentrated thought which is the true discipline and the true power.

Better for us to live, as the early Christians lived, in the dens and caves of the earth; better to be driven, as the non-conformists and the covenanters were driven, to the fastnesses of the mountains and the recesses of the wilderness, there in solitude and silence, without books and friends, to commune

with God, — than to be surrounded by all the light of modern instruction, and still to feed the mind on flashy books, which only corrupt the taste and defile the heart. Do not spend your time over books which unfit the soul for deep thinking and for serious duty. Turn rather to the department of ethics and of mental philosophy. It is a region of thought that requires great power of abstraction, great fixedness of attention, great concentration of mind. It is eminently instructive, and is a mighty discipline to the higher faculties, if you can follow the reasoning. It is intensely attractive, when once you comprehend its grandeur. It shows you the laws of belief, the nature of argument, the limits of knowledge. It places before the mind profound and momentous moral questions, and helps to solve them. It is connected directly with many of the more perplexing, difficult, mysterious problems of theology. According to the spirit of faith or of skepticism in which you study, it will lead to the dawn of heavenly light, or to deep, Cimmerian darkness. Locke, Stewart, Hamilton, Chalmers, in England; Edwards, Upham, Wayland, McCosh, Day, Porter, Haven, Hopkins, in America, — are amongst the greatest names in this ethical department. William Wirt, in one of his letters, says that “the young student of law, if he is overwhelmed with confusion and self-distrust, had better turn from his blind precedents, and his obscure principles of jurisprudence, to a chapter of Locke on the Understanding.” If he has true strength, it will clear his brain, like the sea breeze or the mountain air to the weary invalid; if he cannot read it and enjoy it, “he may hang up his whistle” (to use Mr. Wirt’s own words); he is not fit to be a lawyer.

There are gathered in the various libraries of Boston, and within twenty miles of that centre, more than a million of books, most of them open, without cost, to all the inhabitants. It is a bright, shining honor to this part of New England. So long as these books are our prized inheritance; so long as the truths there contained are studied with earnestness and delight; — so long our farms may be rocky and sterile, but they will raise men; so long our winters may be cold and severe,

but through the long evening, and around the happy fireside, parents and children will meet to read and converse, and there souls will blossom out into richness and strength, more rapidly and more beautifully than any tropical flowers or tropical fruits.

I have not gone very largely into the designation of particular books which are worthy of our study, for time does not permit. At the same time, it cannot fail to be a matter of interest to know what books have specially quickened some very remarkable minds. The first book which Henry Ward Beecher ever bought was the Works of Edmund Burke. Possibly it led him a little too much into the political line of preaching. But of this we may be sure: if it gave him his views of political economy; if it awakened his rich and exuberant imagination; if it imparted to him his wonderful command of language and boundless fertility of thought,—he did not go very much amiss in his choice. Franklin, the Boston apprentice, learned his pure, transparent, condensed style from Addison's Spectator. The immortal young surveyor of Virginia, bred in the family of Lord Fairfax, acquired his clear-headed processes of reasoning from the same source. John C. Calhoun read the works of Isaac Barrow, and gained a transcendent power of abstract argument from those most logical and demonstrative sermons. William Wirt was perfectly familiar with the metaphysics of John Locke. Sir William Hamilton, the great metaphysician of Scotland, was completely fascinated by the sermons of Thomas Guthrie, the most profusely and beautifully illustrated of any sermons of the present century. When asked for the cause of his somewhat singular preference, he replied, that "the Imagination, in its higher action, is the most completely logical and conclusive of all the faculties." Ralph Waldo Emerson says, that the last secular book of the world that he would part with is Shakspeare. John Harvard, the founder of Cambridge College, brought with him, stored in his deep memory as well as in his rich library, Lord Bacon's Essays, a book of which the *British Quarterly* says: "Of all the productions, it contains the most

matter in the fewest words." There is but one book of the world, and that is the Bible. After the Bible, the book which has awakened more minds than any other out of stupidity into intellectual earnestness, and out of impenitence into religious love, is Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

II. *The Advantages of Reading.*

1. This love of Reading *counteracts the influence of mechanical agencies*. Much of the intellectual activity of the times runs in the line of mechanical forces, and of merely utilitarian sciences. Powers of immense accomplishment are adjusted with great skill. Our first thought, as we enter the manufactory, and gaze on its complex and gigantic machinery, on the ingenuity of its arrangement, and on its rapid and accurate and diverse achievements, is, How wonderful is the grandeur of mind which can subdue and subordinate all these powers! Our second, how admirable is the sovereignty, how stupendous the power of God! Our third, how great the danger that man will become a mere unthinking, mechanical worker! A thousand fingers soon learn to follow the machine. Its laws and workings are uniform; there is little chance for human skill; and thus the labor becomes monotonous drudgery. The freedom of the will, guiding the work, does not appear, as in many other employments. The exercise of thought and the diversity of product, according to that thought, the play of genius, and the rewards of study, are all lost. There is danger that the operative in the mills will become a mere automaton, under the despotism of mechanical powers. There is genius in the discoverer, who subdues Nature's laws; genius in the architect, who constructs this machinery; genius in the chief superintendent, who oversees and keeps in play all the wheels and spindles. But in the laborers, who occupy a subordinate position, there is less chance for original thought, and sometimes the least possible opportunity for the exercise of their own ingenuity. There is an urgent necessity, therefore, for the use of means which shall awaken their sluggish minds, and bring in thought and

knowledge to elevate their toil. Let not these laborers become the mere adjunct of machinery; let their minds be quickened and exalted by reading and by thought; let them improve their leisure hours in acquiring information, — and then let their working hours be dignified and sanctified by high, improving meditation.

We extol the improvements of the age. We look on with admiring wonder as an operator, in a little room, with a modest click, sends messages a thousand miles; as the engineer of a railroad train, by turning a lever, or opening and shutting a valve, outspeeds the wind; as the superintendent of the mill lifts his gate, and sets in motion agencies which will spin and weave, in a given time, more than a million of fingers could accomplish. This is a sovereignty over nature which arrests the reason, and deeply impresses the imagination. But after all, free-will is higher than the force of the lever and the screw; intelligent thought is greater than steam or electricity; holy emotion is better than all the results of science and machinery. Let not individuality of mind be swallowed up in the supremacy of the mechanical powers; let not the workman, who has, or who may have, independent thought, information, discernment, logic, skill, degenerate from a reasoning soul to a mere manipulator; let him not become the simple servitor of wheels and shafts and pulleys, and thus an unreasoning slave of machinery. Cultivate the brain, as well as the fingers, and grow in greatness of soul, as well as in agility of handicraft. Mechanism ought to expedite toil, and relieve labor, and give leisure for study; let not its practical influence be directly the reverse. It is difficult to lift the soul above all cramping, outward influences, yet let the effort be made. Let books enter the battle with machines, and counterwork the tendency to sluggishness of thought, to effeminacy of will, to the surrender of an independent, earnest mind. Inspire in the mind a thirst for knowledge; cultivate the habit of reflection; increase the power of originating ideas, and thus shall the mind dominate over machinery, and not be subjugated by it.

2. The reading of instructive books is *one of the most exhilarating and efficient methods of mental culture* to which we can resort. Books are not the only means of mental advancement; books are valuable only as a transcript of nature and of the soul, a picture-gallery of mighty thoughts and mighty deeds. The beauties of nature are everywhere to be seen, and if you have an open eye and an appreciative heart, you can read the handwriting of God without books. The soul of man is before you also, with no interpreter between; and often in this world of eager action, and of wondrous diversity of character, you can read, directly from the life, deeper tragedies than any published volume contains, and attractive exhibitions of fortitude, virtue, nobleness, which can be only faintly portrayed when the pen attempts to describe them. What we mainly need, in order to the highest culture, is a perceptive, reflective soul. Far more depends on this than on the number of the books you read. You need a discerning mind and an appreciative heart, to receive the lessons of experience and of science learned by other souls. Language is a medium by which thought flows from mind to mind; books are interpreters between one soul and another. Of course the soul itself is higher than either language or books, for it creates thought; it assimilates truth; it appropriates it to inward wants; it incorporates truth with the mind, as the digestive organs incorporate food with the body.

There are certain omnivorous readers, but their thoughts are not concentrated nor self-controlled. To them books are liable to become a recreation, and not a toil; an easy occupation to while away the hours, not a laborious process of thinking, to increase discipline and knowledge. Better for such individuals to be shut up, as Bunyan was, without a book, if the inventive brain could only thus be set to dreaming; as Milton, in blindness, dreamed his Epic; as Cowper, in sequestered despondency, dreamed his "Task"; as Hugh Miller, in the Highland bothy, dreamed his geologic science; as Bunyan, in Bedford jail, dreamed his Pilgrim's heavenward Progress. Better for such busy, versatile, butterfly minds,

buzzing from flower to flower, to sip a bit of honey, never to lay up a winter's store, to be isolated, as was Kossuth, in prison, with only a Bible, a dictionary, and a Shakespeare, till, with that scanty tuition, he became one of the most fluent and eloquent of English orators.

Yet let me not depreciate books. We need the influence of other minds, acting upon our own, especially of minds superior to our own. What a joy to us if we could enter the parlor where Washington and Hamilton discussed questions of state; where Luther and Melancthon talked of doctrine; where Milton and his daughters communed of primeval innocence and angelic powers!

We sometimes shrink, perhaps, from the presence of the learned and illustrious, overpowered by reverence, and by an uncontrollable timidity. We cannot sustain our part in such intercourse. What a privilege to hear them, if we were only not responsible for a portion of the conversation. Just this privilege is given to us, when we take up standard books. We sit and hear the authors, and do not share in the talk. We sit by the side of the gifted and the instructed of the race, in their happiest moods, listening to their divinest thoughts and their selectest words. Many of those thoughts and words of great poets, historians, essayists, orators, were first struck out by the contact of minds in social converse. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so the face of a man his friend." When the Waverley novels were coming out anonymously, and all England was ringing with inquiries for the Great Unknown, J. B. Morritt wrote to his intimate friend, Walter Scott: "Ah, sir, I understand very well who is the author of these books. Such and such expressions, this and that, and the other view of character, I have heard quite too often around a certain happy fireside; you cannot hide your hand from me."

I repeat, then, when you read valuable books, you are talking familiarly with the greatest minds of earth. You go back and sit in Abraham's tent door, and hear the patriarch and the angel of God. You are leaning on the bosom of John, as

he talks of Jesus. You are listening, with eager multitudes, to Robert Hall, the silver-tongued orator, the highest master of style; or to Chalmers, the pungent expounder of doctrines and of hearts. You are in the "Literary Club," with Johnson, and Burke, and Reynolds, and Garrick, and Beauclerk, and Goldsmith. You are enjoying those ambrosial nights with Christopher North and his compeers. You hear the conversation between Lady Jane Grey and Roger Ascham, her tutor; between Ann Cooke and Francis Bacon, her son; between Lady Russell and Lord William Russell, her husband; and you drink in those divine consolations and inspiring doctrines which made those martyrs so heroic, and all those souls so great. You are by the winding Ouse, and a playful, timid, acute, tender-hearted thinker is by your side. You are sitting under the Northampton elms, with Edwards, or by the sounding sea and the Plymouth grave-yard, with Webster. You talk of things both deep and high, both mournful and cheerful. Your soul is imbued with a spirit of power, and your whole nature is refreshed and exalted.

There is now a very strong temptation to waste time in unprofitable reading. Books fall from the press "thick as the autumnal leaves of Vallambrosa." The censorship of life and manners and morals, once belonging to the patriarchal family, then taken up by the civil law, then passing into the hands of the pulpit, then exercised by the school-master, is now vigorously used by the press. More constant in its inspection, more wide in its legislation, than either family or school or pulpit or law, it is equally inflexible in its mandates, it is even more stern in its penalties. Where the family left the individual at the age of twenty-one, and the school often earlier; where the civil law surrendered its rule at the portals of hidden thought and inward motive; where the pulpit finds no access to the mind, because that mind is filled with absorbing care and blinded by unbelief—there the voices of the press enter, by day and by night, in solitude and in society, in the private circle and in the general assembly, by most powerful influence to those who have literary cultivation, by constant

influence upon all, for there are none in our American society who do not read. It sways general opinion; it gives and withholds reputations; it opens and it shuts the door of office; it facilitates the progress to wealth; it is the friend of discoveries and enterprise; it quickens the general thought, and becomes an invincible ally of truth; it is capable of misleading thought and propagating error, swiftly and widely, as the pestilence breathes contagion; it opens ten thousand avenues of pleasure, and is in fact the most fertile source of amusement which the populace can know. Where it lays its reproving and avenging hand upon wrong, its lash is like the whip of scorpions, and no hoary tyranny, no injurious custom, no inveterate prejudice, can live before its indignation. Immeasurable is the power of the press, and infinite is the responsibility of those who sit at the fountain of opinion, and lay their molding hand on the character of this thinking age. The responsibility is also great, and I may say immeasurable, of those who can use this vehicle of knowledge for their own entertainment and instruction, for the discipline of the family, for the increase of moral power.

3. This love of reading, also, *adds a new charm and delight to all the recreations of the home.* When the father is weary with business and out-door work, and the mother with domestic cares, and the children with severe school studies, there is no pleasure so great as that which is found in the reading of books, and in the conversation to which it leads. The eager mind thirsts for it; the warm heart rejoices in it. Let books be read to gather up important facts, and to get new light on great principles; let newspapers be read to secure the intelligence of the times. Then, in hours of rest, around the table and fireside, let parents and children, brothers and sisters, friends with friends, talk these matters over; exercise their own reason; call out each others' originality of thought and sagacity of reflection. It will be a mental discipline, equal to a recitation or a lecture; it will be a joy far beyond the recreation of the theatre or the revel. It is a most unfortunate family, if native quickness of mind and acquired fertility

of thought are possessed by its members, and yet no social conversation, no pleasant books, no sound of sweet, singing voices, give joy to its meetings. How can they forego the interchange of congratulations and meditations with one another? How can they afford to lose those intellectual quickenings, and that genial, generous heart-warmth which the love of reading produces? Let home be a garden watched over with love, cultivated with care, where all the flowers of thought shall blossom, and all the fruits of kindness shall ripen.

This love of reading multiplies sources of esteem and sympathy. Love that is not built on intellectual and moral excellence is likely to grow cold and to vanish away. Identity of interest cannot bind, if there be no sympathy of heart. Closeness of relationship, frequency of talk, cannot remove indifference, if the roots of indifference are in the soul. Beauty is fading and evanescent, and is never a sufficient foundation for a life-long record. The memories of old scenes, of generous and faithful friendship, must be cherished by new tokens of intelligence and goodness, or memories are vain. Keep the mind burnished and bright; keep the thoughts busy with new truth, and old truth freshly communicated; then shall father, mother, brother, sister, friend, bind the links of affection with seven-fold force; brighten the memories of the past into the colors of a golden sunset, more rich even than the dawn; make the present a very festival of joy; and be able to look, through the gates of the future, into a higher heaven of endless association, concord, and bliss.

It is of untold importance that our children and youth should be bound by ties of pleasant association and dear delight to home. There is a wide complaint, in our day, of the weakening, and sometimes the entire disruption, of home affinities. Parents mourn over truancy in the family; children are inclined to be absent from home evenings. An adventurous spirit leads them away from the place of their birth, to seek their fortune. In the forest, in the mines, on the sea, on the land, in some distant city, in some lonely, painful, danger-

ous enterprise, they pursue after novelty, pleasure, and wealth, and find, it may be, agony and death.

What is the remedy? First, let us not magnify the importance of wealth, hastily acquired, and by uncertain methods. Secondly, let our youth better understand what true pleasure is. It is a thing of the heart and the intellect, not of sense, nor of novelty of scene, nor of wild, adventurous project. It is spiritual, and not earthly. He who can find in books, and in the society of friends, new thoughts, whenever he comes home to rest, new forms of moral loveliness, and intellectual beauty whenever he steps across his threshold, has found a prize beyond the pearls of the sea, beyond the adventures of the traveller in tropical climes, or of the conqueror on battlefields. Let our children have this fascination of a cultivated and developed thought, and they will not be eager to frequent the street, seeking after the low, vain, profitless pleasures of an hour.

Finally. This love of reading *prepares for the anticipated leisure of retirement and age*. The man of business, and the wife who stands by his side, a true helpmeet, are both ready to say, "We will not always be chained to this oar. Let us acquire a competence for the support of age. Let us lay up in store for the education and for the privileges of our children. Let us carry through present plans and public responsibilities, and then seek some sequestered spot, where, with books and friends, with nature and God, in meditation and conversation and prayer, we will pass through our last years serenely and joyfully." But such a close of life as this needs an apprenticeship, as much as the most weighty and solemn duties. No man of business, no woman of care, without fixed habits of reading, and of frequent interchange of thought, can enjoy such a close of life. Mind, heart, taste, hope, have all been engrossed with daily cares and business toils, and now they have no relish nor preparation for literary pursuits or religious enjoyment. Old age has come; debility weakens the strength; nervous impatience and irritability trouble the

mind; and the unhappy individual sinks into a state of inactivity and hopeless disquiet. This blessed leisure has often been found the most intolerable burden of the life.

What is the remedy for all this failure of hopes? There is none, but wisely to provide beforehand, in the youth, and in the early years of action and of study. Be thoughtful, and cherish a love of reading, all your days; be affable and conversible, your life long. Open your heart to your friends, and let them open their hearts to you. Prepare yourselves for intelligent society. Keep up the literary culture of the family. Be familiar with the current news of the day, and the important intelligence of the times. Do not live without books. And when you have brought the book to your chamber or your home, crack the nut and eat the meat, carefully meditate upon the truth, for it requires patient thought and resolute application to get knowledge, in age as in youth. Bring out the intellectual and the spiritual part of your nature. Then, when you retire, pressed by the infirmities of years, and the exhaustion of long-continued toil, you will have a fund of thought and of enjoyment to fall back upon, an investment laid up in the soul, youthful, beautiful, imperishable as the soul itself.

I know of no combination of attainments more attractive than those which are found in a thoughtful and a saint-like old age. The tree, hoary and ready to decay, has lost its green verdure, its fragrant blossoms, its symmetry of trunk and branch; it will soon fall and perish. The rock, turned up from its primary formation, is eagerly looked at as a fossil, but is of value only on account of its antiquity; it has not the glitter of the gold, nor the ring of the silver, nor the utility of the iron, just heated and glowing from the forge, just stamped and coined in the mint. But these are forms of dead matter, and subject to the laws of matter, which is destined to grow old and decay. The soul is forever fresh and young. Knowledge and love are independent of time and change. The man of business, who has retired from his cares; the woman of piety, whose faith has grown victorious and

strong with stern conflicts and multiplied sorrows, — may still feel that their last days are their best days, and that the radiance of their close is the radiance of a golden sunset. They have passed to that point when passions no longer rage, and when temptations have lost their force. Their children and children's children are around them with blessings and thanksgivings, and their own life is full of exalted hopes and plans of energy and accomplishment. Experience has given them wisdom; and wisdom has given them holy trust, and courage, and hope, and equanimity, and prayer. The memories of their childhood are before them, like the rainbow which spans a distant cloud. The hopes of heaven are before them, like the Star of the East, which burst upon the eyes of the longing Magi. Lyman Beecher, after he reached the age of eighty, said, "Give me back my youth, put me once more in the ministry, and let me live over again this blessed life." Thousands of aged saints have testified that their old age was the happiest period of their experience. It may be so, it will be so, to every one of you whom God permits to live, if your youth is established in virtue; if your great end of living is a high and spiritual aim; if your mind has been disciplined with books and thought; if you have earnestly sought in the great responsibilities, the great sorrows, the great joys of the family life, to prepare the beloved of your household for duty, and to prepare yourselves for heaven.

TEMPERANCE.

[Any collection of writings which makes the least attempt to set forth Dr. Foster's lines of thought, would be imperfect which did not give some specimen of his discussions on Temperance. It has been thought best, however, instead of reproducing any single sermon on the theme, every one of which was necessarily full of allusions to local and temporary phases of the question, to cull from different sermons representative paragraphs on topics of permanent and universal interest.]

MODERATE DRINKING.

MY entreaty is to moderate drinkers. Give us, we beseech you, the force of your example in favor of teetotalism. You are in danger. Upon that danger I will not dwell. It is a subtle and deluding temptation, of whose true features you are not aware. It is a warmth in the blood, which in your bounding life you think the sign of vitality. It is a flush on the cheek, which the consumptive thinks the token of health. It is the soft and lulling influence which is in the air of the pestilential marsh, inducing the gentle slumber which foretokens death. It is the mirage of the Desert of Sahara, which cheats the eye with the semblance of a cool, refreshing stream. It is the gold and the purple of a tropical sunset, beautiful and attractive, but foretokening a tempest. I beseech you, be warned of your own danger. But this is not the highest motive.

Abstain, for the sake of those whom you love. You are the creator and the helper of social fashions. You are drawing into convivial scenes those whose convictions of duty are less clear, whose appetites are more tyrannous, whose force of will is less firm than your own. If you are out of the whirl

and out of the danger of fierce and engulfing vortices, created by intoxicating drinks, they are not. They are on the rim of the whirlpool, and will be swallowed up, if you do not draw them out into calm, unruffled waters. They will go out from your circles of exhilaration, where they had expected to find wit, friendship, philosophy, mental enlargement, high thinking, into other circles, where they will find, not wit, but the paralysis of brain; not the flow of reason, but the chaos of thought; not friendship, but bickerings and jealousies and hatreds; not philosophy, but incompetency of reasoning; not love nor conscience, but a callous heart and the utter confusion of moral sense. They will go out from your influence, the influence of moderate drinking, not to find true pleasure, but wild, maniacal excitement, the unhinging of the judgment, the beginning of insanity, the laughter of the fool. Their final departure will be, not to a pure home, nor a pure church, but to the drunkard's debauch, to the embraces of the harlot, to the blasphemies of the infidel. I beseech you, give no approval nor help to practices which lead to such an end.

This custom of moderate drinking finds its true support and its abiding strength in the higher classes of society, and there the reform must begin. You talk of suppressing the vile groggeries, and of going down into the lower strata of humanity to recover the victims of drunkenness, to find advocates of temperance, and to build up the whole structure of the commonwealth into sobriety and moral beauty. No; if the State and the Nation are ever saved, the process of reform must work in the other direction. Education, wealth, refinement, genius, must cast off a vice, before the vulgar and the ignorant will do it. The affluent classes must deny themselves the small pleasure of moderate drinking, before the poverty-stricken and the miserable will deny themselves the exhilaration of nerves, the exaggerated fancies, the supposed ecstasies, the deep forgetfulness, of a drunken revel. If you would cleanse a mephitic well or a Pontine marsh, you do not send a healthy man with a broom, or a bottle of carbolic acid, into the miasm and the death; that would be to kill him, and help

no one else. No; you pour from above, the mighty currents of healthful air into the mine, or the well, or the marsh. You open a wide and unimpeded channel into God's free light and God's free atmosphere, then let the tides rush. So must you pour down the renovating light and the healthful atmosphere from the higher circles into the grog-holes. Change your own habits of moderate drinking; dash the wine-cup from your lips; contend with these dangerous fashions of society; show their guilt; trace these desolating streams of influence to their awful termination; arrest those who are on the downward current, and who are swiftly nearing the rapids; enlighten the bewildered judgment; fortify the fickle will; restore lost manhood; hold back whole families sure to plunge in wretchedness; save the tottering and the dying.

THE RUM-SELLER'S MISTAKE.

There is a legend of the Isle of Jersey, that all the water drawn from wells, on certain nights of the year, turns to blood. The rum-seller may imagine that he is drawing from deep wells of refreshing, gratifications for his present and his future years, elegancies and refinements for his house, gorgeousness of equipage and show, the name and the power of wealth, affluence, and social position for his children. But does he understand what dishonor attaches to those accumulations, what distresses come in their trail? They are not waters of refreshing; they are streams of blood. They are the agonies of wives forsaken, insulted, dishonored, broken-hearted. They are the wailings of little children, dying in their childhood under the hand of cruelty, or living an ignorant, squalid, degraded life.

RELATIONS OF TEMPERANCE TO WOMAN.

Temperance reform is largely woman's work. She forms the fashions of the times. She rules with an almost despotic power in social customs. She teaches the child. She determines, very largely, the character and the habits of the youth. She guides the man; it is his nature, it is his joy, that he may be led by the silken threads which she weaves around his affec-

tions, by the beams of light which radiate from her intellect and from her life, to form his opinions. She has more influence over this habit of drinking, than any legislator in his hall of debate; than any orator, however high his range of eloquence; than any king on his throne. She can make wine-drinking unpopular in the family and disgraceful in society. She can hold back the young man and the young maiden from the debasing indulgence. Let it be understood that no young man can have access to your family who is a moderate drinker; that in your estimation he has forfeited his manhood; he has lost the guarantee of his purity; he is unfit to have any great interest entrusted to his hands, so long as he drinks. Have you a husband, or a son, or a brother? They are not beyond the reach of the tempter. Hundreds of thousands, as noble and beautiful as your brother, your husband, your son, have been fascinated and destroyed by strong drink. They have become degraded in manners, perhaps utterly disgusting. They have become imbecile in mind, perhaps insane. They have become cruel in temper, perhaps murderous. They have become backsliders from a religious profession, perhaps blasphemous and profane. They have fallen from affluence to poverty, from renown to infamy, from happiness to misery. They have dragged down into incurable wretchedness those associated with them by intimate family ties. They have entailed upon their children hereditary infirmities, and diseases loathsome and terrible. O woman of purity and faith, avoid such men! Avoid the tempting drink which destroys them; avoid the social fashions which, with treacherous guile, allure them from the path of rectitude. Lead not immortal men into this bondage and death. Cast out the wine-cup from your approval and your tolerance. "Wo unto him that putteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips." Put not the bottle to the lips of your friend, or of your child. Let there be no Thanksgiving, nor Christmas, nor New-year's day, no jubilee, nor picnic, nor party, no wedding festival nor memorial celebration, whether in honor of a blessed birth or of a national emancipation, where you, by silence or connivance, help on the

incipient drunkard. If drunkards must be made by any unfortunate and unhallowed customs, let your soul be clear. In the great day of inquisition, when God is searching for blood, and asking of you, "Where is thy brother?" "Where is thy son?" let none of those stains be found on your garments.

I might warn you for your own sake. Woman is wonderfully defended, both by her own innate delicacy and by outward forces of opinion, from giving way to the temptations of drunkenness; but she is tempted, nevertheless. "Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging," to woman as well as man. Appetite is subtle in binding its chains; a diseased craving is tyrannous in ruling the life; and this power of destruction breaks down all fences of age, or intellect, or beauty, or hope, or sex. More than seven thousand women were arrested last year for drunkenness in the city of New York. Eight hundred applications in a single year have been made to the Binghamton Asylum for Inebriates, for the admittance of ladies, from families of cultivation and wealth. But I prefer to appeal, not to your fear for self, but to your love for others; to your quick, and deep, and generous sensibilities; to your enlightened and Bible-taught conscience; to your yearning and intense desire to allure dear friends to an honorable career, and to Heaven.

HEALTH AS AFFECTED BY ALCOHOL.

This question of temperance is a question of health, as well as of morals; and it is in the early years, and by the regimen of the household, that the constitution is to be invigorated, and the foundations of health are to be laid. Teach your children to govern the appetite; teach them to be regular as to times of eating and drinking; teach them to be moderate and self-denying in gratifications of the palate; teach them total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, or seeds of disease are sown, disordered and uncontrollable passions are created; the whole life is open to the incursion of fevers, debilities, plagues, and deaths; and before you are aware, your beloved child is chained by remorseless habits, or lies low in the grave. The

physiological effects of alcoholic stimulants are obvious and alarming. Their action on the delicate tissues of the stomach, and on the more delicate nerves, is immediate. In the circulation of the blood, and the movements of the heart, and the entire system of the brain, they produce rapid derangement. A British soldier, wounded in battle, was placed in circumstances to notice the results of small doses of alcohol. Two eminent army surgeons, after most careful observation, reported upon his case. By two fluid ounces of alcohol daily, the appetite was sensibly diminished, and the pulsations of the blood were increased thirteen per cent in twenty-four hours. The actual increase of labor, in the work of the heart, was equal to the lifting of fifteen tons one foot in twenty-four hours. Dr. Edward A. Phelps describes a young man of thirty, of excellent constitution, of prosperous business, of equable temperament, and happy social relations. A small daily allowance of wine was taken by him. He was never drunk; he was never disguised with liquor; he was proud of his self-control. He had become convinced, by a physician's prescription, that he needed a daily stimulant and cordial. After five years of this course of life, headaches began. There was great sensitiveness over the whole head, a febrile condition of the entire body, and severe pain on holding the head down. Abstinence was prescribed, and that restored him. Again he returned to his old habits, and again the pains returned. More weakness and faintness, and general disorder came upon him, and after five weeks of typhoid fever, the vital forces were broken, and he died; he was never a drunkard. He was never aware that the habit of drinking had conquered him. Still, he was a victim of alcoholic stimulants.

No wonder that in a sedentary, intellectual, anxious life, where the constitution is delicate, where the nerves are high-strung and to the last degree sensitive, where the brain is perpetually drawing off forces from the heart and other vital organs of the body; and where you are compelling the heart to the extra action of lifting fifteen tons a day, — no wonder that you lay upon the heart a strain which brings the whole

machinery to a sudden and fatal pause. You call it apoplexy or palsy, or the breaking of a blood-vessel, or nervous paralysis, or excessive brain-work. But the fact is, you have driven the whole system to unnatural action by stimulants; you have laid too heavy a load upon the heart; its pulses are unequal to the strain, and it stops.

There is another important point in this matter of health. I refer to the moral relations between sense and soul, between matter and spirit, between the earthly and the heavenly. You long for a cheerful, elastic, happy frame of mind, — everybody of common-sense longs for this. With this hopeful, happy frame, you may rise in the morning with a song like the lark, and go about your daily cares with a perpetual warble of the senses and thanksgiving of the thoughts. You may imagine that this cheerfulness is mainly a thing of temperament. No, it is primarily a thing of religious trust, and secondarily a result of temperance. I beseech you, keep bewildering intoxicants out of your brain and out of your blood, if you would have a cheerful youth and a youthful old age. There are some who are always young. It is the youth of the soul, fresh and new, kind and loving, generous and magnanimous; it is the clear eye, the frank smile, the joyous welcome, the intelligent look, the ardent affection, the exulting hope. Gray hairs cannot hide it; they are its flowering crown. Wrinkles and hollow cheeks (which must come with age) cannot drive it away; they are its sheltering nest. It is a quality, this youth of the soul, which comes from heaven, and will go back to heaven. It is a quality which grows out of faith and love and hope, and will abide while faith, hope, and charity endure. It is a confidence in the everlasting right. It is the indwelling of a beautiful, pure romance; the dreams of youth going on into age, and then pluming their wings for the skies. It is a faith in God, the great Supreme; a faith in Christ, the adorable Saviour; a faith in the Holy Ghost, whose witness is in the soul. It is a disinterested love, and a willingness to labor and suffer for human welfare; it is a Christian view of trial, as necessary to purge away earthly imperfections, and to fit for the ever-

lasting joy; it is a willing obedience of the body, with all its organs, appetites, impulses, forces, to the high promptings of the sanctified soul. If you can get this happy and exalted frame of mind, as an illumination shining through this opaque body and through this clouded experience, it is worth all the self-denial of total abstinence, it is worth all the culture of faith and prayer. Age cannot dim your honor or your usefulness; sickness cannot take away your love or your joy.

PRACTICAL MEASURES IN CURING INTEMPERANCE.

There are practical measures for the promotion of temperance which must be devised by the generous heart, and which must grow out of the love of parents for their children, of friends for their home. There are certain temptations which must be removed out of the way. The rum traffic must have its check; scenes of drunkenness must be put out of sight; social customs must be reformed. This may sometimes be done by law; but if it cannot be done by law, it may be done and ought to be done by some wise and energetic scheme of combined influence. In New Braintree, Mass., thirty years ago, there was a rum-tavern. Sober and thoughtful men became convinced it was corrupting their youth. It was the resort of the idle, the shiftless, the obscene, the profane, the sensual. There was no prohibitory law to stop the sale. A righteous public sentiment could not stop it; prayers and tears and entreaties and arguments could not stop it,—the rum-seller was deaf to all persuasions. Those noble men combined their counsels. They said, We cannot see our sons tempted and destroyed. We have a duty of self-sacrifice, of pecuniary self-sacrifice, to prevent a higher and more terrible sacrifice. They drew up and passed a subscription-paper, and in less than a week had raised \$7,000 to buy that hotel. They knew that it would not pay its way as a temperance house; but one thing they were resolved to do, and that was, to banish rum from the traffic of the town. It was an extemporized, self-originated, and self-sustained prohibitory law. They gave the new landlord his rent. So long as the \$7,000 lasted, it should be a

temperance house, and the town should be a temperance town. They revolutionized the whole sentiment of the town. Almost every man and woman came round to their side. They reclaimed their self-indulgent, wayward young men. Thirty years after there was not a pauper in the town; there was no intoxicating liquor sold in the town; there was no drinking nor drunkenness; there was no discord, nor riot, nor outrage, nor scandal.

If the rum-shops of this city could be closed, and temptation withdrawn from our youth; if the opinions of our people could be reformed, and every family and church and school could become a total-abstinence society; if two or three buildings could be established in our city, where cheap lodgings and plain meals and coffee could be furnished at cost; where young men from abroad, without friends and with limited means, could find rest and warmth and lights and a reading-room; — then we should save thousands from a drunkard's grave.

PROHIBITION.

I believe in a prohibitory law; I have believed in it for years; I expect to believe in it till I die. It seems to me that its principle is one on which all just laws are founded, — the protection of society against a great public evil. The injury done to the innocent by strong drink is more than that done by murder, or theft, or robbery, or fraud. If law may ever restrain wrong-doing, where the injury is foreseen and predetermined, where the motives are avarice and self-indulgence and self-will, where the pure and the innocent have no other protection against a harsh, unsympathizing spirit of cruelty, it may restrain in this case.

You hold back the trader from selling a poison that may kill, or any nuisance that is disgusting and pernicious; why does such a restriction deal any more gently with personal liberty, than the prohibition of the rum traffic? You prohibit, by stern laws, the sale of strong drink to soldiers in the army in time of war, lest they be unprepared for the battle. You prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors to the

Indian, lest the fire-water should render inveterate and incurable the savageism of his nature. You shut out the gambler's tools, and the lottery ticket, and the rum-bottle from the military encampment, lest passion should rage without license and without restraint. I beg to know the distinction, in principle, between the two forms of prohibition, and between the two crimes which are restrained. If one is a moral wrong, so is the other; if one leads to barbarism, so does the other; if one makes an appeal to excited, boisterous, ungovernable desires, so does the other; if one endangers society, so does the other; if one unfits for the high duties of the citizen, for the tender love of the friend, for the sacred obligations of the family, so does the other.

It is said, "The law is not executed." If it has not an executing force, it has an educating force. Either by the power of penalty restraining, or by the power of argument and instruction, elevating the purposes of the good, it does change the habits of an entire Commonwealth. Governor Perham says, in his recent message, "that in proportion to the number of its inhabitants, there is not another territory on the face of the globe that consumes so little intoxicating drink as the State of Maine." Is not that a great thing to say? Is not that a State worth living in? Must there not be many families of intelligence and harmony there? What has done it? The prohibitory law, of course. They have schools and colleges there, and they are seminaries of a high order; but we have others as good in other parts of the land. They have eloquent advocates of temperance there; but probably no more eloquent than the rest of the United States and of England. What brings that State the nearest to a total-abstinence community of any in the world? Neither its antecedents nor its climate, neither its intellectual, nor its pecuniary, nor its religious privileges are any more a safeguard to that State than the privileges of other States to them. It is the prohibitory law.

The — *Republican* says, "There is no considerable portion of people, outside of Massachusetts and Maine, who

regard rum-drinking and rum-selling as a crime." We shall take the liberty in a moment to question the correctness of this statement, as a fact. But, for the sake of argument, admitting the proposition, is it not a pleasant thing to find ourselves in agreement with a majority of the people of Massachusetts and Maine? There are half a million of instructed minds in those two States, that believe in the rightfulness and the expediency of a prohibitory law. It is not possible to find in any province on this globe, a half million of people, living adjacent to each other, who are more conscientious, intelligent, upright, exalted in all points of character, than this half million. Not even the aristocracy of England, nor the *litterati* of Paris, nor the scholars of Germany, nor the Huguenots of France, nor the heroes of the Netherlands, nor the Covenanters of Scotland, have been or are of a higher type of character. It is a delightful and an encouraging thing to find yourselves in accord with them, on a great question of social obligation and of moral reform.

With regard to the other remark, most certainly it was spoken without information. New Hampshire has a prohibitory law; Vermont has a prohibitory law; New York, in 1868, gave a majority of sixty-seven thousand in favor of a prohibitory law. "Ohio," says the Cincinnati *Commercial*, "has enacted a law which puts the power of prohibition into the hands of the towns and the cities, and gives the people authority to shut up every liquor-den in the State." Pennsylvania, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, have enacted laws which give the right of prosecution against the rum-seller, and of recovering damages, so that the wife abused by a drunken husband, or the citizen injured by a drunken neighbor, can impose a penalty upon the rum-trafficker which is truly appalling, and which amounts to the sternest prohibition. Surely the idea that rum-drinking and rum-selling are both crimes, is a somewhat prevalent idea. There is not a civilized community on the face of the earth that allows the sale of intoxicating drinks, without any restriction. Every license-law implies limitations and checks. Surely, the — *Repub-*

lican spoke without information, or otherwise made a hasty and unconsidered statement.

It is said that a prohibitory law interferes with personal liberty and inalienable rights. Why any more than any other law? The law places no penalty or check upon any man's free-will, until the meditated wrong is carried out into overt act, and the injurious blow is struck upon society. We lay no restrictions upon individual liberties, where those liberties do not encroach upon another man's rights. A person may sin against his own soul or his own life; if his sin be in the thoughts unknown to others, or in a secret place where his example cannot reach others, the law does not touch him. Thus far the wrong is between the sinner and his conscience, between the sinner and his God. His retribution may be a very great and awful one. It may be the loss of peace and of influence; it may be the loss of the soul. But the prohibitory law enters not. The law is for public injuries,—for wrongs, which by power of contagion will spread, or by power of direct injury will destroy. In such a case, if you hold to the right of government at all, if you do not throw man unfettered upon the weltering tides of passion, to rage in universal license, then prohibit, prohibit!—there is no other consistent, nor safe, nor Christian rule. Use all methods of persuasion to produce total abstinence. Use love in the family, science in the school, patriotism in the public assembly, gospel doctrine in the sanctuary. Organize associations; combine social forces; hold meetings and conventions; employ the press; be faithful in the parlor; bring your children up in habits of abstinence. Bring them to some place of decision, no matter how sacred, and there pledge them by immutable covenant, as Hannibal was pledged against Rome, against rum, forever, and forever, and forever to hate and renounce intoxicating drinks.

THE RUIN OF INTELLECT FROM ALCOHOL.

The ruin of the intellect is made complete by intemperance, and many other forms of ruin follow. In the illustration of this

principle, you might catalogue an infinite series of crimes; an infinite series of most melancholy, deplorable follies, where many a strong intellect, beautiful as the stars of night, brilliant as the sun of the morning, rising like the sun in splendor and in glory, that bid fair to make a happy day for wide circles of friends, has gone swiftly down, out of light into darkness, out of beauty into deformity, out of blessed hope into utter despair. I might begin with such names as Burns and Byron, poets of unsurpassed power; as Charles James Fox and Sheridan, orators of acknowledged eminence; as Goldsmith and Dickens, authors of world-wide fame; and I know not where the list would end, of mighty souls, cast down from their summits of privilege, into weakness and dishonor. Look at the distinguished Gottschalk, the most brilliant piano-player of the world, recently deceased. Born in New Orleans, educated in Paris, holding entranced all assemblies by his music, at the age of forty-one, in San Francisco, in the flush of redundant health, at a vast musical concert, carrying the whole audience with him by a very deluge of harmony, he dropped instantly dead. What killed him? Wine, opium, gambling, licentiousness, into which he plunged without restraint. Look at Daniel W. Appleton, the grandson of Daniel Webster, born to talents, and honors, and fortunes, and hopes, which you would think an angel might covet, sinking into weaknesses and disgraces, from which a fiend would eagerly flee; thrust into a jail at Neponset overnight, because too beastly to be seen by civilized people; setting fire to the jail with his matches and cigars, burning himself almost to a crisp before morning, so that in less than a fortnight he died a miserable and despised wreck of humanity. Look at Capt. Eugene Smith, nephew of Abbott Lawrence, passing through a career of honor in the war, entering as private, and rising from rank to rank, till twice he led on the whole regiment to the assault, and led them out from battle, scarred and victorious, after all the higher officers were killed. His uncle, G. W. Smith, president of the Empire Life Insurance Company, New York city, had given the young man a place in his office, with large chances of promotion and

wealth. Alas, alas! the rum madness had seized him, the rum fiend had conquered him. He lost his place in New York. He went to New Orleans. He did not keep himself from the grog-shop, nor the dens of iniquity. He had no character on which to build confidence. He could not get work. He plunged himself from the fourth story of a billiard saloon and perished. Look at the long list of past members of Congress, who may well be termed illustrious and unhappy drunkards: Intellect ruined; reputation lost; honor and influence thrown away; fortunes and hopes, of body and soul, of time and eternity, squandered, utterly squandered, by the insane desire for intoxicating drinks. Once they stood in the Nation's eye; they held the Nation's ear; knowledge, eloquence, integrity, genius, power, belonged to them; no gift which the Nation could bestow was deemed too great for them;—now they have fallen so low, there is none to do them reverence. The sooner and the deeper they can slumber in oblivion, the better will it be for them and the Nation they have disgraced. Oh, woeful list! Oh, fearful hallucination! Oh, melancholy dishonor!

SOURCES OF PULPIT POWER.

[The following sermon was originally prepared as an address, with the title, "A Living Theology the Source of the Orator's Power." As such it was first delivered before the Theological Society at Dartmouth College, and subsequently at Middlebury and Williams Colleges. Mention of Dr. Foster's work on the address, and of its delivery, is made in the Biographical Sketch on page 93. The address was delivered at Dartmouth College, July 27, 1859. On the 13th of the same month Rufus Choate had died. The original address, in summing up the characteristics of the possessor of true eloquence as a man of genius, applied this description to Mr. Choate. At this point Dr. Foster, turning from his manuscript, gave an extempore tribute to the memory of the great orator, which was characterized, by those who heard it, as befitting both him it eulogized and the address in which it occurred. The address was afterwards remodeled and rewritten to serve as a sermon at installations, Dr. Foster being frequently requested to preach on such occasions. In this form only it is preserved. It was delivered at Malden, Mass., in the spring of 1871, at his son's installation as pastor there, and subsequently at Dunstable and Essex, Mass. It has great value from a biographical point of view, as setting forth the ideal which Dr. Foster was ever striving after as a preacher of the Gospel.]

1 COR. 1: 21. — "*It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.*"

THE preaching which God appoints is deemed foolishness by some, but it is the wisdom and the power of God. It is drawn directly from the fountains of infinite truth. It accords with the highest deductions of science, and with the profoundest consciousness of the soul. It has strength of argument, and beauty of poetry, and pathos of love, and grandeur of genius, equal to any other development of mind, and often beyond any common range of intellect or power. If the preacher proclaim the Word of God, and be imbued with the Spirit of God, there is an authority in that argument, and a weight of conviction in that appeal, not found in any treatises of science or any eloquence of the schools.

I propose to consider some of the constituents of pulpit power, and I mention these five,—

- I. A Believing Spirit.
- II. Consecutive Thought.
- III. Independent Thought.
- IV. Simplicity of Style.
- V. Loyalty to Truth.

I. The faithful preacher is distinguished by a *believing spirit*. He exalts the reason by the exercises of faith; he stirs the fountains of emotion and touches the springs of heroism, by appeals to the unseen and the eternal. He inquires after the Right, and planting his foot upon the Revelation, he does not turn aside from that foundation. The laws of God are immutable, and all human theories which are a departure from those laws, however they may be extolled as improvements by short-sighted mortals, introduce only confusion, and must pass away. It is a day of speculation and novel propositions. Bold vaticinations are made of a good time coming. Brilliant hypotheses are put forward, sustained by fanciful trains of thought, and intermingled largely with eulogies on man. Commerce and science and letters are made the agencies of a new Evangel. New themes, new aspirations are placed before literary men.

The scholar is apt to say, "I have present palpable possessions of the mind; I have definite, demonstrative treasures of knowledge; I have a conscious, positive, exalted soul-force. Of what interest are your religious propositions to me? I prefer the seen and the temporal, to the unseen and the spiritual; I prefer the present to the future; I prefer the positive and the scientific to the hypothetical and the prophetic." Now it is the business of the preacher to meet this state of educated mind, and to show that the treasures of religion are present and palpable, are positive and scientific, and absolutely immeasurable. There is harmony between philosophy and faith; there is agreement between the doctrines of the everlasting Word and the doctrines of true reform. Not only

so, — there is no permanent philosophy without faith; there is no true reform without the Bible. And the public sentiment must be brought to this position of faith, or our political and social improvements are like the beautiful cloud-scenes on the top of Mount Washington, driven by passions and controversies as those clouds are by rushing, wintry winds. The popular mind needs to be pervaded with seriousness, and to be restored to its true equipoise by the discipline of religious instruction and of prayer. We move in the midst of agitations. We are not as yet so grossly sensual, as we are vainly excitable, though the passion for frivolity and amusement will lead, by obvious processes, to grovelling indulgences and sordid pleasures. We rush after wealth, rather for the enthusiasm of the chase than for a miserly love of gold.

The nation plunges into political campaigns as if a thousand worlds were depending, when the general motive is eagerness for party, rather than zeal for principles. Commerce, manufactures, agriculture, politics, have their perpetual revolutions and excitements. Education and literature are keeping up an intensity of thought and emotion. All minds are eager after novelty, in the news of the day, in the projects of the hour, in the dreams of the poet, in the fancies of the metaphysician. It is difficult to hold the mind back from vagaries, and to keep it to logical processes. We need results of rigid reasoning, to keep us from wild, delirious hopes; we need religion to balance and guide our unbridled imaginations; we need the Bible to quell the rhapsodies of the imagination, by the high and solemn doctrines of self-renunciation, by the uplifting energies of faith. We need schools of religious instruction, and men of a profound spiritual belief, to give to the public mind thoughtfulness, comprehensiveness, depth.

The ship that sails safely across the Atlantic must have ballast in the hold, as well as canvas in the air; if we would not suffer shipwreck while passing across life's uncertain sea, we must have solidity of principle, as well as poetic dreams. We are living an artificial life, and this creates artificial wants. It is important that the popular imagination and thought be

restored to a state of more earnest meditation and sobriety; no longer eager after luxury, wealth, pleasure, after sensational literature and sensational debate, but persuaded to take a careful estimate of the laws of rectitude, and of the great social and religious duties of the citizen. We are intense, but fickle; we are heated to fever-heat, and often the fever runs into delirium. Our lives are lives of distraction and weariness and disappointment, because we are absorbed with an inferior good; we are satisfied with human speculations; we do not seize a divine and infinite treasure. We alternate from brighter hopes to anxious forebodings, and lose positive good in chasing the phantoms of a dreaming mind. More Biblical instruction, and less vain speculation; more controlling faith, and less of the play of fancy, — would save us. Unless the power of a believing spirit can save us, I believe that, as a people, we are on the verge of English ritualism, or Italian idolatry, or German infidelity, or French profligacy. We need more confidence in the Bible, more Baconian induction from admitted facts, and less transcendental subtlety.

The tendency and the demand of the times is to trust in genius and sagacity. Follow expediences and obey worldly maxims; for the wisdom of the age is superlative, and faith is vain, if it has not the recommendation of science. Seek for the patronage of the great; for truth is feeble, if it has not the *imprimatur* of distinguished men. Religion is good as a civilizer, but of little value as a regenerator. Banish barbarisms, educate ignorance, ameliorate laws, introduce comforts, but be not anxious to create anew the heart. You have a bramble tree; raise figs upon it by cutting off the thorns, not by grafting a new shoot into the old stock. There are writers and speakers who are careful to show how freedom and refinements have grown to their present height and power, by the side of the Gospel; but they do not show the reverse process, how degradation and barbarisms have come in where the Gospel was absent. They do not exhibit the utter futility of the researches of the learned and the philosophies of the wise to build up virtue without the Gospel. They go over the his-

tory of Christian nations, and describe the discoveries of the scholar and the inventions of the engineer; they magnify the beauty of art and the grandeur of poetry; they sing pæans to liberty and to human reason; they recite the statistics of the politician and the blessings of good government. Such reasonings, unduly dwelt upon, lead to an entire forgetfulness of Christ and His Cross; such reasoners substitute forms for faith. They defy the reason, and propagate a religion of self-complacency; they set up an image to literature, and science, and the arts.

They centre all thoughts upon the present life. Genius is more than Revelation, philosophy is more than faith, and the inspiration of Christ and His apostles is only one of the necessary and the natural steps in the advancement of the human mind. Man advances by experiments, and observation, and intuitions, and reasonings; and when he gets through his ingenuities, he is absorbed again in the Deity, of which he was an effluence at the first. All this may be beautiful as a theory, and satisfactory as an anticipation to those who have not the Christian's hope. But it is all a figment of the speculating brain. Where are the facts, to lie as a basis? Where are the testimonies from nature, to support the hypothesis? Where are the evidences from the inward consciousness? Where is the accordance with admitted rules of logic? Most of all, where are the proofs from Scripture and from the dealings of God with His church? Shall we bring down the doctrine of God to the level of finite minds, and ask for the patronage of diplomacy and the consent of worldly wisdom, before we accept God's declarations? Shall we dig wells in the desert, when God gives us rain from Heaven? Shall we attempt to bow down and adore the god of this world, in order to gain an accession of his territory? Shall we cast ourselves headlong from the pinnacle of the temple, built by human hands, in order that some treacherous theory of the modern times may save us? No, it is not the method of the believing heart, nor the argument of true, ministerial power.

II. The successful minister, imbued with the spirit and

power of the Bible, *is marked by consecutive thought*. God lays down eternal principles, and does not always hold himself amenable to our reason to exhibit causes and disclose connections. Inspired men have written proverbs. Congresses, endowed with national authority, may make laws. It is the privilege of judges to establish precedents, and sometimes to dictate rules of judgment. It is permitted to men, like Bacon and Pascal, who have an intuitive perception of law, whose genius shines with a brilliant and far-reaching lustre, to be sententious and positive. But the successful preacher does not speak *ex cathedra*; he does not deny the right of private judgment to other men; he does not assume to explain, with infallible interpretation, the Book of God; he does not make his own intellect supreme in the field of discussion. He gives his reasons, and he admits that his discourse is made up of opinions, not of laws. The public speaker who undertakes, in this age of the world, and in this country of universal culture and of democratic thinking, to carry his points, either by sneers and ridicule on the one hand, or by dogmatism and force of will on the other, has sadly mistaken the true methods of conviction, and the true sources of popular power. His lot should have been cast in the Middle Ages, and in a semi-civilized society; and even then his words of arrogant and vain assumption never could have survived the progress of free inquiry.

There is a fixed law which controls all legitimate thinking; there is a staple of argument which underlies permanent power. Take any speaker, who holds the attention of an audience, and who imparts to them instruction, and his propositions follow one another, not by arbitrary rules, not by fatalistic conjunction, not by the mere determination of an energetic mind, that such shall be the relations of truth, but by kindred ties which God has appointed, — by the consanguinity of truths where you find the fellowship of resemblance and co-operation. There are established rules by which processes of reasoning are carried on, new truths are evolved, right judgments are formed. The mind that does not see those

rules is ignorant and feeble; the mind that cannot see them is sluggish and imbecile; the mind that does see them, and wilfully rejects them, is lunatic or perverse. We may have a multitude of imaginations, whether brilliant or rapid it matters little; if they do not spring from sound premises and stand in just relations to each other, they are valueless. They are reveries, which have no meaning, nor aim, nor force. They are fancies, which amuse and please, but springing from no cause, they lead to no result; they are beautiful, but transient as the shooting-star. They are day-dreams, or night-dreams (it is of little consequence which), which have no method. Crotchets of the flighty brain are not arguments of the impressive speaker. Vain and fond conceits are not necessary truths. They may be prized by the mere literary epicurean; they may belong to the mind which is eager to startle, but careless of instruction; but they indicate no wisdom nor abiding power.

There is no genuine power, except in truth seen in its connections and presented in impressive forms. Thought is in itself spiritual and immaterial. It is the product, the manifestation, of an immortal spirit; but to be communicated to creatures of the flesh, it must have a form. It may reveal itself to the eye, to the ear, to the other senses, and be conveyed by them to the sensitive, all-apprehending soul. It may be conveyed by words, which are purely and only signs of thought; by tones and emphases, which give new significance to words; by looks and attitudes and gestures, which vary and intensify the meaning of language; but all this does not convey the true power of thought, nor reach the highest sublimity of eloquence. There is a form in which thought may be presented, rising above all power of single words and separate sentences. It is a more subtle and sublimated form, which we call logic; it is the combination of agreeing thoughts; it is their arrangement in fit proportion, so as to constitute reasoning, and sustain an important principle. In books, truly conceived and truly wrought, it is science; in speeches, self-supporting and complete, it is argument; in the sermons of

instructed men, whose intellect and emotion are fused together, each subordinate to a specific end, each controlled by a correct taste, each the handmaid of religious truth, it is eloquence. And these forms of thought surpass the possible power of any single word or single sentence, as much as the oak of the forest surpasses the acorn.

It is by this coherence of thought that the impressive preacher avoids a tiresome monotony. He imparts to common themes a surprising interest and power. It is characteristic of him, that he does not hunt for novelties and eccentricities, but the most familiar topics become associated, under his handling, with the most admirable reasonings. The charge is sometimes brought against religious discussion, that it is infected with an intolerable sameness, and therefore tedium. We find not infrequently such a representation as this, "Theology is a system; therefore it has no variety, nor freshness, nor power. The same list of texts is strung on identical strings, in somewhat different order; but the preacher, going over his heads of discourse, is like the Catholic counting his beads, as he recites his Paternoster. The whole round of doctrine, from the fall of man to the saints' final glorification, must be jumbled into one hour's declamation. Talents vary, forms vary, discipline varies, but evangelical sermons are the same, from week to week and year to year." This is caricature. Let us look at the grain of fact it contains. The theology of the Bible is a system. This is true. But if the recapitulation of familiar doctrines is a source of dullness, how wonderful it is that this system has maintained its hold upon the minds of men, never ceasing, never weakened, for two thousand years; as influential to-day as when Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures, as when Augustine or Luther expounded heavenly doctrine! Well may we regard this system of theology as the power of God!

Take such an example as was seen when Rev. Dr. Griffin preached his Park-street Lectures in Boston. The enemies of orthodoxy rushed to hear them with extreme avidity. They left the house with vehement opposition to the truth; they

would stop at the corners of the streets in great heat to fight the battle over again. Then, on the next Sabbath evening, they would crowd the house once more, again to hear, again to dislike, again to return. The doctrines themselves were wonderful, if they could thus overcome the frightful monotony of the preaching. Suppose — if the supposition be possible — that the thoughts of the Gospel preacher are commonplace; his analogies only fanciful; his diction poor; his argument feeble; his succession of topics monotonous. How amazing is the interposition of God, who disdains the excellency of human wisdom and human speech, and with such impotent weapons of war demolishes the strongholds of error and of sin!

But is there not some mistake about this prevalent idea that systematic theology is monotonous and dull? How is it with science, in other departments of study and learning? Is our knowledge usually less interesting because it comes to us in the form of an established and unchanging system? Would not it be well, for variety's sake, to break it up into incoherent parts, and to scatter it abroad as fragmentary truth? Would it not be a relief to the tedium of the college professor, and a deliverance from the possibility of wearisome sameness, to have a little more uncertainty in his principles, and a little less logic in the steps of his progress? Would it not be desirable that he should amend his Davies, and his Euclid, and his Olmstead, by bringing a little (or a good deal, it matters not which) of the rhetoric of the tyro, and the speculation of the sciolist, and the rhapsody of the scientific infidel, into his teachings? Would it not be well, in order to get out of the humdrum path where former scholars have walked, to mingle empiricism with science, and guesses with first truths? Would it not be well to escape from that monotony which believes the very principles now which were admitted when our fathers were boys, and which, in spite of all remorseless iconoclasts, are likely to live on through another generation? Which are most to be coveted in science, — things that are true and not new, or things that are new and not true?

How is it in Jurisprudence and Law? Does it render the argument of a great advocate more trite and tame, because he brings forward corroborating opinions from Coke and Blackstone, and his precedents from Holt and Mansfield, rather than from the petty bench of a neighboring county? Does it detract from the decision of the judge, that he adopts a legal system; that his mind is familiar with an elaborate science of jurisprudence; that he draws his quotations and principles from Roman law and from rules of eternal equity, as well as from the last decision of a court of common pleas? Yes, we plead guilty to the fact that our theology is a science, and that the rules of our sacred schools, and the common-sense and adoring faith of our churches, compel the preacher to abide somewhat closely within the bounds of a system and the fences of logic. But we traverse the plea, that there is any lack of variety, or freshness, or interest, or force, attaching to his discourses on this account.

There is no paucity in the themes which he considers; there is no barrenness in the field which he reaps; there is no sudden shortening of the line which holds him, when he launches upon the ocean of God's truth. He may sail forever on that unfathomable deep, and find no shore. The relations, applications, and results of divine truth are absolutely boundless. Suppose there were only thirty doctrines in the system of the Scriptures, as there were thirty-two nails in the shoes of the horse, for which the clown was ready to pay one cent for the first, two cents for the second, four cents for the third, and so on, — he very soon found the bottom of his purse, and also of his brains, but he did not make the last payment. In like manner, these shallow speculators, afraid of the monotony of Scripture doctrine, will very soon find the end of their knowledge, though not of the system of revealed divinity. There is danger, indeed, and imminent danger, of monotony and dulness in the preacher, as in the legal advocate and in the literary lecturer; but the source of his peril is not in his subject, but in himself. Original power of thought, guided by taste, enriched by learning, enforced by logic, will make

the most familiar topic, however hackneyed, new and rich. A meagre, feeble mind can make nothing out of any subject.

III. The truly impressive preacher *is characterized by independent thought*. The field of truth is broad enough, and the subjects of discussion are numerous enough, to allow endless variety and constant originality. Originality comes by viewing thoughts from the centre of one's own consciousness and experience; bringing truths into new relations, and sustaining them by new facts; extending widely the faculty of illustration; entering into the grandeur of an historic occasion or solemn interest of a religious occasion; taking up the theme appropriate to the hour, and showing the applications of a wide and various knowledge to that theme; deducing from the revolutions of the world, and from the comparison of opinions, important principles of action. This is independent thinking, and this is eloquent speech. No man has ever yet exhausted any theme of education, or ethics, or religion,—no single mind ever will, for the combined wisdom of the world is always greater than the wisdom of any one mortal. And the hidden wisdom of God, which he has reserved for the study of eternity, is an ocean, illimitable, unfathomable, inconceivable. The noblest thinkers of the race, in seeking to cross this ocean, are like rude aborigines of a new continent,—ignorant as yet of the laws of navigation, with courage that is soon appalled by the mystery before them, in frail canoes, they skirt along the shore. The minds which are most adventurous and strong are not permitted to cross that deep. But we may hope—with study and with faith accepting the Revelation, gathering up the knowledge of the past, using faithfully our powers—to stretch out somewhat further on the broad expanse, to feel that we are in the true course to the final harbor, and that gales of heaven are filling our sails, to feel that we are at last on the sea, and that our horizon is no longer bounded by land.

The independent thinker, using diligently his own faculties, has no occasion to fear that he shall run in another man's track, or encroach on another man's domains. There is room

enough in the sky for the stars, and there is room enough in this world for all various minds, and for all self-originated and well-founded views of truth. Independent thinkers are not separated into warring sections. They may follow the bent of their own mind, and the lead of their own peculiar discipline,—one more metaphysical; another more imaginative and poetical; a third more historical; a fourth more profoundly theological and critically exegetical; a fifth more practical,—but they all belong to one fellowship, they are all advancing one blessed cause, and the more original the thought the deeper the love. No convincing speaker can be a servile borrower. His thoughts must be his own, from whatever source the germs of his knowledge come, whether from observation or conversation or books; whether from history or nature; whether from colleges or the wider seminary of life. His thoughts must be his own, taken into his soul and fused there under the furnace glow of his own hearty emotions, mingled always with that which he has felt in his own experience and reasoned out by his own meditations. The conceptions of all active minds are wonderfully suggestive to other thinkers. They lead at once to other trains of reflection, associated and kindred, yet independent and original.

Our best ideas and our largest communications of knowledge are simply the natural growth of seed planted in the mind from other sources. Intellect sharpens intellect; heart responds to heart; suggestive thoughts are spoken or written. They start new trains of thought; they wake up the dormant faculties; they send the mind out in unwonted directions, ranging widely and eagerly after truth. And thus have come most of the discoveries, brilliant essays, impressive appeals of these later times. The public speaker who thinks to be wholly independent of other men's thoughts, will soon come to repeat himself, and very poor repetition it will be. At the same time, the mind of the progressive and fruitful preacher is a fountain, and not a mere reservoir. He must have independent reflection, as well as acquired knowledge. But if his mind be a fountain, just like every other fountain, it will be attracting

the living waters from all sides. Vivifying streams, silent, ceaseless, numberless, will be permeating through the earth, and coming down from the sky, and running along in the grass, and filling the fountain with a constant influx, while it sends forth its sparkling currents widely to refresh. It is this which distinguishes the unfailing spring from the stagnant pool; it is this which separates the fertile intellect from one that is sterile and dull.

The independent thinker, instructed by gospel truth, surveying the boundless immensity of knowledge, cannot be otherwise than humble. Every truth is opposed by its antagonistic falsehood; every holy doctrine and just theory has its counterfeit. Amid the many important discoveries which have been made by the human mind, there have been innumerable baseless experiments, wild conjectures, disappointing failures. Therefore he does not rush rashly and hap-hazard into new and untried schemes, so as to make it the principal business of his life to revolutionize opinions erroneously formed. Life is too short to be spent in unlading false cargoes of counterfeit product, when fragrant spices and tropical pearls are to be found in so many islands of the sea.

The faithful preacher desires to think independently, yet he is more anxious to think correctly. He is anxious to investigate science and comprehend its relations. He searches after the philosophy of mind, and morals, and society. He brings the history and opinions of the past to bear upon his points. He allows the Bible to stand as umpire between him and his conclusions. Independent thinking is just thinking only after patient and persevering investigation. Bacon, and Milton, and Locke, and Edwards, crept along slowly towards the truth. Long-continued research had no weariness for them. They had no wings to vault into the heavens; or, if they had, they gave them time to grow, and they mapped out clearly their aerial voyage before they attempted to fly. They made learning subservient to discovery. With all their force of imagination, with all their exuberance of intellectual strength, they did not venture to propound new theories, till the basis had

been laid by years of meditation, and by comprehensive erudition. They did not suppose they could weave systems, which should advance human intelligence, and check the course of error, out of the mere fibres of the brain, as easily as the spider weaves its web. And if any one would think independently and wisely, he must cherish equal self-distrust, and an equal sense of dependence upon God.

Independent thinking is very likely to run into intellectual vagaries and eccentricities. It is easy to do strange things, to say strange things, for the sake of arresting attention and gaining notoriety. But there is no thought which wanders from the Bible that is true, there is no theory which rejects the grace of Christ that is profitable. Novelties are not inspiration; the exaggerations of the romancer are not genius; the contortions and skill of the rope-dancer are not the enduring vigor that accomplishes a life-work; the sprinkling of the street-hydrant is not a universal shower, although some companies of men and boys may think the hydrant is the more wonderful invention. Probably some clouds will continue to give rain after these water-machines have adjourned; probably the Bible will continue to rule the souls of men and shine on for future centuries, after several brilliant gas-lights, and shavings kindled in the chimney-corner, and even auroral displays, have disappeared.

But after all these limitations upon independent thought, and these considerations which should inspire modesty in the investigating mind, the Christian thinker, desiring to instruct his fellow-men, hopes it may be possible to learn something which other minds have not learned. He hopes that some new truth may break forth out of the word of God, beyond the conclusions of Luther and Calvin, beyond the systems of Edwards and Bellamy, beyond the practical rules of Wesley and Whitfield, beyond the eloquence of Robert Hall and Francis Wayland. He is not overconfident of this, nor is he vainly self-reliant; still he hopes for progress. He hopes some additional argument, evidence, and illustration may be found, by which Bible truth shall be recommended to the consciences

of men ; he hopes some additional methods may be devised, still more effectual for the reform of ignorance and vice and crime ; he prays for the elevation of morals ; he longs to see the poor, the profane, and the wretched gathered within the shelter of Christ's fold ; he would banish passions and prejudices and wars. His soul is burdened with unutterable longings, and his mind is laboring with ceaseless plans, if peradventure God would give him wisdom and grace to bring in some improvement, to strike some telling blow upon stereotyped forms of falsehood, upon the hoary head of infidelity, upon the strong fortifications of sin. He looks upon the history of the past, and he sees revolution following revolution, and great advances often resulting from insignificant causes. He believes in progress. Truth is a vast and boundless sea. There may be undiscovered continents in that ocean. Sailing calmly in the sunlight of God, wafted by the winds of heaven, availing himself of known laws of navigation, making Christ his pilot and prayer his hope, even he may discover some peaceful and flowery island, untrodden as yet by human foot. But his hopes, though large, are not built on human strength nor on vain self-confidence, and the hopes which he does cherish, he cherishes only in meek dependence on the Word and the Spirit of God. If, like Albert Barnes or Joseph Addison Alexander, when they devised their commentaries ; if, like Lyman Beecher, when he boldly withstood the advances of intemperance and infidelity in Connecticut and in Boston ; if, like Moses Stuart, when he took the key of a more natural and scholarly exegesis to unlock the dark problems of Scripture, — he may be permitted to devise an original and valuable plan of unfolding the ways of God to men, he rejoices, and to almighty grace he ascribes the praise.

IV. The earnest, persuasive preacher *attains simplicity of aim and style*. He seeks to penetrate at once to the centre of his subject, and to present the entire argument without circumlocution or digression. He searches for the soul of eloquence, and not for the form and the counterfeit of it. The world has too often been cheated by shams, and the genuine

thinker asks for realities, and not for shows. He asks for the spirit of power. How shall I attain grandeur of thought? Where shall I find a soul-quickening and soul-elevating motive? Where are the sublime results for which an immortal spirit may worthily live? Show me this inward power, this ennobling soul-force, says the weary, anxious thinker, or show me no forms, make me no prophecies, delude me with no words. Now the doctrine of Christ, the true Scriptural theology, takes its starting-point on earth, amid vapors of darkness and agonies of fear, but its goal is in the highest heavens. It rises instantly out of the mist, to the clear atmosphere of divine truth and celestial visions. Its hand, by prayer, takes hold of the hand of God; its communion, by love and by self-sacrificing deeds, is with Christ; its agency of resistless might, working with it and for it, is the Holy Ghost. The preacher, proclaiming this doctrine, does not have to beg a hearing. His message has authority. It does not pass by the ear, like idle wind, forgotten with the breath that utters it. It does not fall, like water on the rock, that cannot be gathered up. The scoffer, attempting to overthrow it by witty sneers, might as well strike, with his puny arm, against the rock of Gibraltar, or puff, with his scanty breath, against the north wind. Such a message will be received and revered. Worldliness and unbelief stand abashed before it. Even scholarship and amiableness appear in its presence insignificant in worth. Such a religion gives to its possessor courage, and nerve, and tone. Both intellect and heart are invigorated by it, and filled with a dauntless purpose. Such a preacher is modest, as knowing that he stands on the borders of infinite truth; he is earnest, as knowing that it is the truth of God; he is gentle as John the beloved disciple, but fearless as Paul the cogent reasoner. He is calm and thoughtful as Melancthon, forecasting the future; he is ardent and determined as Luther, turning not back, although princes and prelates and armies, with menacing terrors, might stand in his path. He does not obtrude his opinions, yet he has opinions; he does not run around to proclaim his independence, yet he maintains independence. Paying

due deference to the opinions of others, he walks in no beaten track, for the sake of treading in other men's footsteps; neither does he turn out of the road into unknown paths, because others have walked before him. He clings to the doctrine of God, and holds it forth, with all the strength of argument and of earnestness imparted by profound convictions. Asking for toleration, he gives it; desiring charity, he practises it. He does not say rash things, to show how much he can dare; he does not withhold true things under stress of fear. His doctrine is from God; and while he does not ignore the disclosures of science, nor scorn the philosophies of men, he is more careful to bring his views into accord with the divine testimony than with human theory. Theories may change, and have changed. New combinations of the reasoning mind, and new discoveries of fact, may show defects in the science. This has often happened, and will again. But miracles, and prophecies, and histories, and arguments, all show that the revelation is unerring and immutable.

Of course, all vain literary ambitions are nipped in the bud and slain at the root. He has too sincere and exact a love of truth, to festoon it with flowers of poetry, simply for the sake of ornament; he has too large a confidence in the energy of Scriptural argument to suppose that it needs the accessories of art; he has too much knowledge of men to suppose that they can be won by rhetorical fancies, when they are not won by evidence and by truth. He may have illustration, as well as fact and argument; figures of speech, as well as figures of logic; natural beauties of style, such as every man of æsthetic culture and large education is likely to use. But there is no foamy crest upon the billows, unless there are rolling tides of evidence, argument, emotion, below. He is careful to free himself from affectation and cant. If a man of sense, he is contented to appear as he is. He does not go into spasms in order to appear great. He is not the mimic of a master, nor the echo of an illustrious voice. He is true to nature, and relies upon the power which truth imparts, and not upon the surprise which eccentricities awaken. A fervent sincerity, a

clear intellectuality, a love of exact statement characterize him. He communicates great thoughts in simple words. He does not kindle pyrotechnics, when he can walk by sunshine. He does not manufacture thunder by rattling over a bridge, when God has made a storm. If great events of history, and great discoveries of science, and great conclusions of philosophy, are to be presented, he deems it better to let them stand in their own clear light, and not to daub them with paint.

Fantastic writers and speakers may have their hour, but it is the hour of the fire-fly, the drowsy, twilight hour, when neither sun, nor star, nor moon appears. These unnatural, eccentric speakers may gain repute as geniuses for a time, but they are set down as men of weakness in the next age. Men of true power, like Jonathan Edwards, as a thinker, do not tear a passion to tatters, nor flaunt their thoughts before the eyes of men, like a navy banner in a gale of wind. The man of power does not set himself up as an oracle, and say, "Mine are the only thoughts, and wisdom will die with me." He does not clothe his ideas in studious language of the metaphysics, and then, because people do not understand his mystical words, exclaim, in the contemptuous phrase of Dr. Johnson, "Sir, I am not bound to find you in brains." There are those who imagine that quaint expressions and facile imitations are signs of power. The energy to move men comes not after this method. An intellect that firmly grasps its subject, a range of thought wide and free, suggesting more than it utters, belong to the man of power. His lips speak as conviction and emotion prompt; his tones come from the heart; his imagination subordinates nature to its uses, not by hunting after prettinesses, but by boldly seizing analogies. His knowledge is exact; his logic is coherent; his style is transparent. His purpose is to construct, not demolish, and thus he goes forth to his great work of unfolding truth and commending it to the acceptance of men.

In total opposition to this calm power, we sometimes witness the spasms of the fanatic. We meet now and then a man who is possessed with a fallacy, as the ancients were with

demons. All men see that he is ruled by a falsehood, but no one can convince him that he is wrong. To himself he is a god. He soars into the stars, and feels it not when he meets an Icarian fall. He thrusts his insane crotchets into men's face and eyes, and thinks that he is strong. He is an Indian brave, and his blood-stained tomahawk is more than all the ordnance of consummate science. He is a Hindoo fakir, and his shrivelled arm, held aloft, is better than a thousand flexible limbs, through which the healthy blood is pouring. He is an infidel fanatic, and no grandeur of God's infallible Word, authenticated by miracles and by power; no wisdom of instructed minds, combining and applying the researches of the past; no virtues of the regenerate Christian, symmetrical and beautiful as a firmament of stars,—can equal his supposed inspiration. He is possessed of a master-passion, born of earthly heats; he is a sublime demoniac; he suffers, and is glad; he spends his life in the support of heresies and eccentricities, and rejoices; he shocks the common sense and common reason of the race, and still he rejoices; he dies, his fanatic folly driving him to the verge, and still he denominates himself victor. Such is not the power of the true preacher.

Finally. The preacher who has power *is characterized by an unfaltering loyalty to truth*. Everything depends on the ruling motive which guides the character and determines the aim. It is of vast importance, also, that a right direction should early be given to the energies of the mind. One youth becomes swallowed up in a self-seeking ambition, and he develops to the world as a man of mighty talent, but only as a conquering hero, like Napoleon. One trains himself for parliamentary supremacy; all studies and all recreations bow to that aim, and he becomes a William Pitt. One is eager for wealth; the world has little interest to him, except as a piece of financial machinery, and he is a Stephen Girard. One is bent on legal reforms; with acutest intellect and comprehensive study, he sifts the just and the rational out of the mass of jurisprudence; he exalts the whole practical administration of the land, and he is a Samuel Romilly. Another aims

directly at the moral elevation of the race, and this is the highest aim of all. It matters little by what methods he works,—whether by books, or institutions, or speeches; whether in the parliament, or in the school, or in the market-place, or in the pulpit,—he is the man of power. Let this spiritual aim be adopted in early life, let it be pursued with unfaltering steadfastness, and it will lead to eminent usefulness.

The true minister, guided by faith, has confidence in the ultimate victories of right. In the flux and reflux of opinions, in the ebb and flow of revolutions, whatever else may change, he is sure that rectitude changes not; and though a thousand defeats may be set down on the side of truth, yet the eyes of men are blind, and they do not see future results. The truth of God must finally succeed, no matter how slow its triumphs nor how long its conflicts. God is omnipotent and sovereign, and He has the leisure of eternity to work in. He exercises a constant sway in the world of mind as in the world of matter. He appoints established laws in both realms. He uses fore-ordained means, adapting them to their purpose, and making all conflicting counsels and agencies bow before them. The simple, uniform means which He uses is His revealed truth, presented by the living voice and sustained by a holy example. There is no contingency here, nor doubtfulness, any more than in the rolling of the planets, or the vegetation of the spring. We find perturbations and disorders in the system of the stars; we find our expectations often disappointed in the growth of the plant. But God's laws are not annulled, nor His purposes defeated. There is more complication, intricacy, perplexity in the workings of free-will. It is difficult for us to trace all relations of cause and effect, and the movements of various agencies in the formation of character and in the history of man. But God's omniscience looks through all; God's providence is over all; God's legislation surrounds, pervades, controls all, and His designs are no more to be defeated in the moral than in the physical kingdom. The law, if you look at

it abstractly, is complete, comprehensive, immutable. But it is not to be regarded abstractly, whether in the growth of the flower or the circuit of the sun, in the changes of an empire or the salvation of a soul. Its home is the bosom of God; its inflexibility is the will of God; its results are the voice of God. It has no independent existence, but it is simply the expression of the divine and never-ending Sovereignty. No hidden chances or fortuitous influences can ever overthrow its power or counteract its agency. The forces of the universe work for it; the devices of the wicked, by unknown processes, help it; principalities and powers, theories and systems, conflicting and agreeing wills, in heaven and on earth, are subordinate to it. The believing preacher, therefore, has confidence in God's truth, and this sustains his heart under discouragement, and arouses his mind to intense action. He does not allow himself to be idle; he does not allow himself to despair; he does not allow himself to dogmatize.

It results from this loyalty to truth, that he is willing to wait for the triumph of his principles, and for the vindication of his name. Error must die, for it has multiform voices, and all discordant; it has various aspects, and all inconsistent with each other; and in the clash and the war of its antagonistic forces, it tends ever to destroy itself. But the truth of God agrees with the constitution of nature and the deductions of science. Its guardian and strong defender is God. It is imperishable and invulnerable. Therefore, the advocate of this truth is serene and hopeful, not agitated, nor angry, nor despondent. He has faith in the Divine promise; he has faith in the principles of right, and in the working of eternal laws. The minds of men may be driven with fluctuations and uncertainties; the world of opinion may be tossed with surgings and tumults; yet he abides calmly and unfalteringly by his convictions, resting his hope upon the Word of God, and pursuing his researches with ever-fresh ardor of study.

He is not specially anxious for immediate results. He can wait. He has no feverish longing for ephemeral notoriety. He has no love for crude theories, and for undigested, uncon-

secutive conclusions. He is not over-hasty in putting forth his pronunciamento. He desires to grasp a subject before he expounds it. He desires to subject his opinions to the tests of reason and of time, before he professes to comprehend a code or to develop a system. He has a patient temper of mind. He knows that "time is short, but art is long." Favorable circumstances of life may help him to accomplish his aims, or unfavorable circumstances may hinder him, but no hindrance can permanently disturb the quiet progress of his researches. He has a thirst for knowledge, which no fatigue can overcome, nor labors tire. He has a determinate end in view, and he pursues it, constant as the days. Life may yield, but not the purpose to which his life has been consecrated. There is a stern, yet delightful necessity laid upon him to do his utmost; a necessity growing out of his rational nature, his religious responsibilities, and his immortal hopes; a necessity more urgent than all illicit temptations, stronger than time, or change, or death. He paints, not for to-morrow, but for eternity. Nothing can turn him aside, as he pursues steadily—to the eye of some slowly, but steadily—his onward way. He maintains the balance and equipoise of his faculties. He works on in tranquil silence. When he speaks, it is not with vanity and egotism. Yet he has confidence in the truth, not because he has reached it by the action of his own mind, not so much because, weighing past opinions, and following the laws of legitimate reasoning, he has found it accordant with science, as because he has found it in the just and harmonized interpretation of the Book of God.

He gives himself to persevering, systematic reflection. His opinions are the natural growth of a healthy and earnest mind. He follows the law of development which God has appointed for the progressive, scholarly, spiritual preacher. He adopts the method of discipline and of culture by which the benefactors of the world have built up their fame and won their great reward. And thus it happens that the true preacher, seeking to guide the general opinion and to form the general character, feels that he has undertaken a high and even fear-

ful task. He is overwhelmed sometimes by the greatness of his responsibility; he is conscious of his inadequacy; he sinks in faintness when he measures himself by the standard of the Gospel and by the attainments of holy men. But you cannot take from him his confidence in the revealed will of God. As he lies, faint and weary, on the bosom of Truth, the gentle, divine mother of his soul's strength, he is refreshed, and he springs up again, with the energies of a giant, and renews battle with error and sin. God gives to him strength according to his day. God gives to him victory over spiritual foes, and his final reward is sure.

CHARLES SUMNER.

[This biographical sermon was first delivered in the John-street Church, Lowell, March 22, 1874. It was repeated shortly after before the Franklin Literary Association of the same city. It excited universal interest, and the desire was wide-spread among those who heard it, that it should be printed. On page 173 of the Sketch is inserted a friendly correspondence relative to a passage in the original discourse on Mr. Sumner's rupture with the Republican party. That passage is omitted here in accordance with Dr. Foster's intention when he originally prepared the manuscript for publication. Yet it may be said that it was a passage which, while blaming Sumner for his relations to Grant's administration, treated him with the utmost fairness, and attributed to him the most conscientious motives. This discourse will fairly serve as a specimen of many others of a commingled biographical and political nature. Dr. Foster never allowed the death of great public men to pass by, without seizing the occasion to draw lessons of religion, of character, and of statesmanship, from their lives. In accordance with this practice, he prepared elaborate discourses on Webster, Chief-justice Chase, Lincoln, Washington, and others.]

2 SAM. 3:38. — "*Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?*"

THE great statesman of America has been laid to his last long rest. One of the last words he spoke was, "I am very tired; I need rest." He has found it. His life was a fearful conflict. His brain was driven to its highest tension, for long years. He was crushed down by the fierce blows of a bludgeon in the hands of a giant. He was under the pressure of the most intense political agitations that have ever shaken our nation. He was subjected often to bitter censure, and even denunciation. He had, more than any other man, the leadership of the hosts of freedom in the civil war,—an anxious, a fearful responsibility. He has died prematurely, under the mighty, unparalleled pressure upon nerve and brain. Henceforth, through all the ages, in all lands, where liberty is

cherished, his name and fame are secure. I propose to consider some of his great qualities.

I. Charles Sumner was a man of unimpeachable *integrity*. His convictions of right were to him emotions, as vivid and controlling over his course, as the love of pleasure to the fashionable, or the love of beauty to the refined, or the love of learning to the scholarly, or the love of friends to the tender-hearted. He followed his convictions of duty through darkness and storm, as well as through the sunshine; through obloquy and evil report, as well as praise. No mariner, caught in the ragings of the tempest, surrounded by fogs, near to the rocks, driven by whirlwinds, menaced by crashing thunders, in danger of deadly collision, ever watched for the tremblings of the compass more constantly, more eagerly, than Sumner watched for the Higher Law, which reason suggests, which God appoints. He was a man of sensitive conscience, indefatigable in his search after truth, loyal in devotion to right. I do not say that his conclusions were always in absolute accord with the right; other men, wise and good, might differ from him. But I do say, that he sought to know the right as earnestly as any man living, and he followed his convictions of right as bravely and unselfishly as any man who has trod this western continent.

He consecrated himself to the welfare of an injured race. He stood for the great foundation principles of republicanism. He was the champion of law, and justice, and equal rights. He was the friend of human progress. He stood in the pathway of great pecuniary interests, and blocked their advance; but he held this to be an immutable truth, that pecuniary advantages can never be made to crowd aside the principles of equity. Material interests can never be allowed, for a moment, to conflict with moral and intellectual culture. Cultivate mercy and love, cherish justice and fraternity, though the heavens fall. What shall it profit to gain the world and lose the soul? What shall it profit to establish tariffs, and organize banks, and build up commerce, and start the play of a million shuttles, and cover your fields with golden corn, and dwell in

houses of luxury and elegance, if you wound the great principles of humanity? It is a vain policy, to do evil that good may come. It is blind statesmanship, to fortify and perpetuate a wrong, that you may build a republic. If you incorporate into the state rules offensive to God and antagonistic to right, you are providing for future disruption, and calamity, and agony; you are weaving into the fabric rotten timbers, deformed proportions, hay, wood, and stubble, to be cast down with an utter overthrow in the collision of storms, to be burned up with a total consumption in the time of conflagration. These were to him axioms of civil government. He could not tolerate an injustice, nor keep silence in its presence; but with indignation and vehemence and persistency, with evidence upon evidence and appeal upon appeal, with largest resources of learning, with linked and welded argument, with vivid kindlings of the imagination, with sensibilities of the heart, sometimes so deep as to impede the utterance of his words, with all the marshaled forces of deep thought and overpowering eloquence, he drove straight for his mark.

The ordinary politician has a thousand temptations to turn him aside from the right line of integrity. His occupations are engrossing and urgent, and unless he is rigid in his rules of study, he will not have time for the investigation of abstract principles. He has many constituents, of many minds, and it is often impossible to harmonize their views; and the easiest method of action is, to balance them together, and offset them against each other, and choose the rule of expediency, instead of the rule of right. Opinions are antagonistic; interests are in conflict; sectionalisms rage; popular forces stand in hostile array; partisan plottings are put in the place of God's law; and the temptation is one of mighty stress,—Seek some compromise, yield a portion of admitted right in many directions, and bring out, as the end of your statesmanship, a resultant of forces, moving adroitly between the beautiful and the deformed, between the just and the unjust. Mr. Sumner was not a compromiser nor a trimmer. If the ball took the wrong direction, he stood in front of it to stop it. He was not con-

tent to give it an oblique movement or a retarded movement; let it move right, or not move at all.

II. Mr. Sumner was a *scholar*, large in information, rich in thought. He was a profound thinker, always a lover of books, always a hard student, searching into the reason of things, eager to improve his hours, eager to increase his knowledge. We need to be admonished of the lessons which such a life affords. It is labor which conquers all things; it is severe application which paves the way to greatness. "Genius," says an eloquent writer, "is the disposition to study, and the power to study." Mr. Sumner had this sort of genius. You could not destroy his relish for work; you could not lessen his intense and unquenchable thirst for knowledge. If he was wearied with one prolonged and perplexing train of thought, he would turn to another, and find refreshment. In the entanglements and the conflicts of law, the cobwebs were cleared out of his mind by the classics. If he was overtaken and borne down by political wranglings, he consoled himself with history. Addison, Bacon, Burke, Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Milton lifted him up out of the confusion and the despondency of antagonistic opinions, out of the passion and the storm of debate. The last book that Salmon P. Chase ever read was Bennet Tyler's sermons. The last books that Rufus Choate ever read (they were chosen for his mental recreation on his last interrupted journey to England) were Prof. Tayler Lewis's exposition of Genesis, Jeremy Taylor's Sermons, Wordsworth's Excursion, and Paradise Lost. The last passage of poetry which Sumner ever read, and I presume the last passage of any book (it was on Monday evening, and he died Wednesday afternoon), was that magnificent sonnet of Milton, in which he describes the persecution of the Waldenses, and God's providential care and righteous judgments in vindicating His own administration. In the calm walks of literature, in the deep essays of the ethical reasoner, in the imaginative flights of the poet, Mr. Sumner found perennial delight. He would turn away, for a whole twenty-four hours together, even in the period of absorbing congressional work,

leaving his jurisprudence, his legislative precedents, and his constitutional discussion, to study out a Biblical discrepancy, or a theological difficulty, for a little child. Like Burke, and Gladstone, and Derby, of England, like Guizot of France, his original bent, strong and decisive, was towards literature; and when statesmanship claimed his service, then his vast and beautiful scholarship became one of the unailing sources of his fertility and power. From his first speech in the Senate to the last, he never failed to draw from all the histories of the world, and from the standard literature of all nations, argumentative, illustrative, awakening, persuasive forms of thought. I have studied his speeches with special reference to this point, and I have no doubt that he is unsurpassed by any orator of the world, legislative or legal, literary or sacred, in the gathered riches of all learning. Henry Ward Beecher has more spontaneous illustration, drawn from the simple and varied forms of nature around him. Thomas Guthrie has more wonderful similitudes, growing out of the sublime and the terrible in earth, and air, and sky. Jeremy Taylor has an imagination which disports itself in all eccentric forms, more inexhaustibly. Rufus Choate will prolong a metaphor, and play upon its tuneful changes, with more of oriental luxuriance. Edmund Burke abounded in similitudes, but he was more lawless, and sometimes more coarse, in his figures of speech. And yet I believe that not one of these men is so thoroughly versed in various literatures, so fertile in the use of biographies and histories, so rich in analogies and in strokes of chaste and unexpected fancy, as Sumner. The historian, like Hallam or Macaulay or Motley, may surpass him in his own specialty. But take an argument on a given subject, for a given end, and in the exhaustive treatment of it, Mr. Sumner has an unexampled faculty of learned, analogical, and instructive illustration. His works, when they are completed, as they are likely to be, in twelve or fifteen octavo volumes, will prove an inexhaustible thesaurus of philosophical principles, of beauties of the imagination, of felicities of style, of powerful argument.

It has been said by some that Mr. Sumner was not a prac-

tical man. Says a leading newspaper of the country, "Mr. Sumner was a gentleman, a scholar, and an orator, but not a practical man." The conviction of these men is that philosophy, learning, argument, and eloquence have little to do with actual administration. I conclude we have all read the history of nations with a different eye and with different inferences. In every age, and in every free province, the great orator has sown the seeds of thought, and kindled in the popular heart the love of right, and planted Liberty's fruit-bearing tree. Where would have been our Republic, when the great hour of '76 had struck, if we had not had men like James Otis and John Adams and Patrick Henry? Yet they were not practical men. Edward Burke and Lord Chatham, when they faced the hostile Parliament of Great Britain, pleading for American rights, were denounced as impractical. Pity that they had not had a little more common-sense, like Lord North and George Grenville! Pity that when Russell, Sydney, Vane, and Eliot, pleaded for liberty, in tones of exalted eloquence, and in a spirit of entire self-forgetfulness, dying the martyr's death in attestation of their sincerity, that they had not a little more practical talent! No; when we denounce the great parliamentary and popular orator, whose life is an evidence of devotion to right, whose inspiration is the spirit of freedom, who is ready to face deadly peril that he may promote his country's welfare, and when we seek to stigmatize him as a dreamy idealist, lacking practical ability, we forget the whole philosophy of mind and all the lessons of history. Great enterprises of pith and moment have always been born in the student's brain. The profound thinker, meditating and elaborating in the seclusion of the closet, filling his intellect with the great discoveries of truth, rousing his soul with the sublime principles of freedom, until heart and brain are on fire with the grandeur of his conceptions, has then come forth into the popular assembly, and kindled a flame which will emancipate many republics and illuminate many nations. Schemes of benevolence, reforms of government, elevation of morals,

have always been indebted, and immeasurably indebted, to the studious scholar and the profound thinker.

For the first ten years of his senatorial life, Mr. Sumner was in a feeble minority in Congress; and not a bill, nor amendment to a bill, nor proposition of any kind which he brought forward, could meet with favor. For the next thirteen years of his parliamentary life, his mind was as fertile in practical measures as that of any other senator. But, after all, the very height and glory of his practical power, was in his scholarly, judicial, philosophical influence. He cast down a gigantic system of wrong. He stirred the nation from the northernmost corner of Maine to the southernmost point of Texas. He was the first to stand on Mason's and Dixon's line, and show to the world, beyond a doubt or a dispute, that there was a North. He was the first to meet those skilful politicians and diplomats of the South, and to match them, argument for argument, fact for counter-fact, philosophy for philosophy, history for history, sage prophecy for wild prediction; — to match them, did I say? to overthrow their argument, their history, their philosophy, their prophecy, with an utter discomfiture. He was the first to show to those plotting and wily men that no bribes nor flattery, no social seduction nor worldly blandishment, no threat nor terror nor martyrdom, could move him from the defence of great moral truths, from the assertion of immutable human rights. I admit all that Garrison did before him; I admit all that Seward, and Chase, and Wilson, and Hale, accomplished by his side; I admit the fidelity of many patriots, and many churches, and many secular and religious journals, in the defence of human rights; I acknowledge, with gratitude, the work of Lincoln and his coadjutors; and yet I believe the whole work of emancipation would have failed, without Charles Sumner. God, in His providence, gave him a post, a spirit, a learning, a logic, and a power, unlike any other man. And in the political sphere, he was a leader of the antislavery host, and a controller of the national destinies, as much as William the Silent ruled the destinies of Holland, or

Coligny the Huguenots of France, or Wilberforce the abolition of the slave-trade in England, or Robert Peel the abolition of the Corn Laws. Charles Sumner led on the revolution which crushed slavery out of life; and if that is not practical power, as opposed to mere theory and to maundering speculation, then tell me what practical power is.

III. Mr. Sumner was an accomplished *jurist*. The great rules of constitutional law, as expounded by Story, Kent, Marshall, by Mansfield, Blackstone, Stowell, held him, as the romantic story holds the eager child. He had no larger nor deeper joy. When in Europe he sat at the feet of Pardessus, Degerando, and Foelix, illustrious jurists of France; of Mittermäier, Savigny, and Ranke, in Germany; of Parkes, Rolfe, Follett, and Denman, great lawyers of England. He edited twenty volumes of Vesey's Reports, three volumes of Story's Decisions, Dunlap's work on Admiralty Practice, largely adding, by note, commentary, and essay of his own, to the value of those books. He lectured for years before the law students of Harvard, standing, in their absence, in the place of Greenleaf and Story, and giving no opportunity to the young men to feel any sense of loss. Judge Story declared, in the last days of his life, "that he should die content, if he could leave his professorship in the hands of Mr. Sumner." God had chosen the bold and devoted lover of freedom, the master of moral philosophy and of legal politics, for a higher and more difficult service than that of a college professorship; otherwise that had been his probable destiny.

He also attained to a mastery of international law, to a knowledge of the intricacies of foreign diplomacy, to a discernment of the bearing of moral principles upon the great events which are transpiring in the intercourse of nations, which made him an authority in the judicial tribunals and the royal cabinets of the civilized world. His speeches on the Trent case and on the Alabama case startled the whole of England, and some of his propositions were vehemently combated by parliamentary orators, partly because they saw there was no foothold for themselves, if they admitted his whole

case; partly because his argument had such power, that, if not weakened, it would carry the verdict of the world. For a time, Mr. Sumner's speech on the Alabama question seemed greatly to increase the probabilities of war. But no intelligent person, now looking back, can doubt that he saw more deeply into the complication of events than most; that he saw not only the rule of justice, but the play of motives, in international relations; and that he paved the way, in a remarkable degree, for the final adjustment, by which we secured exemplary damages for the wrong of Laird and his Birkenheaders, for the injuries committed by Semmes and his crew.

Mr. Sumner has done a work for the world. It is obvious that, great as his influence has been in the Congress of the United States, to establish principles, to mold legislation; great as his power has been in the country, to exalt public sentiment, to vindicate laws of liberty, to rally the intelligence and the virtue of the land to the support of emancipation; great as his accomplishment has been, in giving hope, courage, and high aims to the freedmen, he has propagated views, of no less importance, for the harmony of other civilized nations,—for the diffusion and maintenance of universal peace. His senatorial career has been so useful and brilliant, that there is no parliamentary assembly of the world that can afford to be ignorant of his orations. There is no writer on law, there is no advocate of justice in the world, who would not be wider in his information, and stronger in his arguments, from a knowledge of Mr. Sumner's books. Those books may not have all the aphoristic condensation and wealth belonging to the writings of Lord Bacon. It is not easy, in the argument of particular legislation, taking cases as they spring up in the administration of government, to be as sententious, and as fertile in universal truths, as Bacon and Grotius and Blackstone, in their more general discussions. Still we believe that Sumner's writings will far outlive the speeches of Clay and Calhoun; will stand, side by side, in the study of future scholars and the esteem of future statesmen, with the great constitutional arguments of Webster; with the great judicial

decisions of Story ; with the philosophical discussions of Burke ; with the startling appeals, in behalf of freedom, which fell, at long intervals, from Fox, Erskine, Mackintosh, Brougham, Romilly, Gladstone, and Bright.

IV. Mr. Sumner has been an eminent *popular teacher*. The first twenty years of his life were given to the culture and development of his intellect, so that at the age of twenty-two he was widely known and marked, as of peculiar and brilliant promise. He was the favorite pupil of Judge Story, and his standing was high, not only in the books, but in the love and esteem of all the Harvard faculty. He went to Europe when twenty-six years of age, and his letters of introduction, from the best men here, carried him at once into the most accomplished society there. And there, with jurists, advocates, and historians, with poets and statesmen, with men of science and men of large celebrity, he moved as an equal and a peer, commanding their approval, awakening their expectation, gathering from their richest stores of thought. Mr. Sumner has said, within the last few months, that, in his view, conversation with eminent men was the most improving of all forms of culture. His experience in England was doubtless the foundation of that remark. He came back from that European tour, after four years' stay, with knowledge, finish, and power shining forth from his life and his addresses, as the sun from the summer sky. From that hour, and for the next ten years of his life, he became a popular teacher, placing great truths before the people, with clear, convincing argument, with winning and sometimes overpowering eloquence. Richard Cobden said of one of his orations that it was "the noblest contribution ever made, by a modern writer, to the cause of peace."

We hear a good deal said, in these times, about the power of the lecture as an instructor of the people. The pulpit, the press, the school, the family, the social circle, the lecture, divide the suffrages of men. Beyond a question, the lecture occupies a place, in these latter years, which it never did before. The lecturer is a man, or a woman, accomplished in

many sciences, and many arts, and many rhetorics. The lecturer is sometimes a blunderbuss, and sometimes a full-sized Paixhan gun, charged to the brim. Five or six orations, prepared with great elaboration, presented with oratorical skill, will last a year, sometimes five or six years. I offer no disparagement of the lecture, or of this system of instruction. It is an attractive, an impressive, and a powerful means of good. In the hands of such a man as Sumner, it is, without qualification, a most persuasive and useful agency of instruction. He uttered no nonsense, nor clap-trap, nor frivolity, nor feebleness. He left every audience imbued, I might say inspired, with solemn thought for meditation, with noble examples for imitation, with high resolves for action. He spoke to the populace of Boston on the Grandeur of Nations; to the students of Harvard on the admirable virtues of Story, Channing, Pickering, and Allston; to the young men of Amherst on Glory and Fame; to the alumni of Union College on the Law of Human Progress; to the courts of Boston on the True Rules of Education in the Schools; to assemblies, here and there, on the Evils of War and the Obligations of Peace. And in those times of political agitation, he began to show, in different gatherings and conventions, his intense love of freedom, and his surpassing power of argument for Republican rights. He had the form, the face, the eye, the voice, and the movement of an orator. He held vast crowds by the hour, by the two hours, willing to stay, eager to hear, drinking in his weighty thoughts, his consecutive trains of thought, even to the very edge and climax of the peroration. His instructions were full of light, warmth, beauty, and impressiveness. I doubt whether John B. Gough, with his dramatic genius; or Henry Ward Beecher, with his descriptive skill; or Anna Dickinson, with her caustic wit; or Wendell Phillips, with his extraordinary strokes of eloquence; or Daniel Webster, with his philosophy of politics; or Tyndall, with his science; or Froude, with his history, — has ever equalled, in the full combination of instruction, pathos, imagination, power, the lectures of Sumner. It was the exhibition of foundation

principles, in their clear unfolding and true application. It was character, virtue, conduct, and life, vivid and beautiful as the colors of the rose or the tints of the morning. It was didactic instruction, given with deep and honest emotion. It was given with varied examples, and with interesting and arresting illustration. It was made accordant with reason and with fact; it was sustained by evidence; it was accompanied all the way with a sense of rhetorical finish and of moral insight, and with that inward and deep satisfaction which results when the soul is fed with immutable truth. Thus, until he was forty years of age, Mr. Sumner labored as a popular teacher, not standing, in the eye of the world, so prominent as afterwards, but enlightening thousands of minds, and drawing to himself thousands of hearts.

V. Mr. Sumner was *a self-sacrificing hero and martyr*. He was forty years of age when he entered the Senate. His tastes did not incline him to public life. He was more fond of the studies of the college, of the retirement of the library, of the meditations of the closet, of the conversation of literary men, than he was of the eager competition, the turmoil, and the strife of politics. It was a sense of duty to the slave which forced him into the notice of the nation. It was the conviction that Freedom was in peril, and that the defence of liberty was to be maintained by the legislator at Washington, that compelled him to stand for the office of Senator. There was the practical, governmental responsibility; there the actual, moving power; there the great argument was to be rehearsed; there were the men who held the slave, and by whom the great questions of liberty and of humanity were to be decided. Could he move them by truth, and evidence, and persuasive appeal, to favor emancipation? If not, could he induce them to yield to majority rule, when Northern opinion and legislation should outweigh their own? According to all principles of genuine Republicanism, there was nothing else for the slaveholder to do. We are a government of majorities; if not, we veer inevitably and swiftly towards bloody anarchy, or towards remorseless despotism. Mr. Sumner had

one other question to answer. Suppose the South should refuse to yield to majority rule, was he prepared to stand in front of their violent opposition, and take the consequences? It was the post of imminent and of infinite peril. He had foreseen the difficulties; he had calculated the dangers. He did not desire to meet them, but the call of Freedom, in her hour of need, compelled him. He desired to emancipate a race from bondage; but still more, he desired to vindicate principles of equity on which all human progress is built. He desired to snatch the Republic from dishonor; he desired to save a continent from false institutions; he desired to rescue his own race, of English origin, of Norman culture, of Saxon energy, the governing race of the world, from the weakness which injustice and wrong must entail. He desired to preserve the independence and the purity of the Colonial Fathers and the Revolutionary Heroes, and to hand down their reverence, energy, tenderness, humanity, integrity, to the coming generations. He desired to stand by the truth of God and by the laws of rectitude.

He knew it was a post of difficulty, delicacy, and instant danger, and he did not wish for it. If the people claimed him, and compelled him, he could not say them nay, for duty was higher than privilege, more exacting than scholarship, more compulsory than comfort, or pleasure, or happiness, or ease. While the canvass was going on, he would not speak a word to forward the effort. Austere, silent, and anxious, weighed down by an infinite sense of duty and of responsibility, he waited the result. For four months the legislature was striving to secure an election, and could attend to hardly any other business; for four months the Commonwealth was shaken by this agitation, from its mountain line to its sea-coast border, from its metropolis to its most distant farms and obscure cottages; but Mr. Sumner did not move a finger to secure the place. No electioneering occurred by his connivance; no spending of money or flattering words; no wire-pulling, no button-holing. When he was chosen, and Mr. Dana carried him the news, and the papers reported the ringing of bells

from Boston steeples, and the firing of cannon in Puritan Worcester, and joy peals from the Berkshire hills, and jubilant responses from the Western prairies,—he burst into tears, and said to his friend, “I am filled with an inexpressible sadness, lest I cannot meet your expectations, and vindicate the great cause.” He did not desire the office, but took it reluctantly, with a disinterested love of Freedom, and love of Truth, and love of Man. In the spirit in which he received the office and commenced his great work, I discern the high-toned and far-seeing convictions of the self-forgetful hero, I see the consecration and the anointing of the martyr.

You know—the country has that story by heart—how the blows were rained upon him, after his great speech of May 20, 1856, on the Kansas and Nebraska bill; and how he sank, unconscious, his garments bathed in blood, at the feet of Morgan of New York, who caught him in his arms, and saved him from additional bruises. More than twenty blows were poured upon his defenceless head, with the calculated momentum and the fiercest intensity of a strong six-footer, with a cane of the specific gravity of whalebone, and seven eighths of an inch in thickness, and by the first one of those blows he was blinded and made insensible. Two great gashes were cut in his head down to the bone, two inches in length, and one inch under the scalp after the instrument of torture reached the bone. Nathan Darling, a captain in the army, and accustomed to care for wounds, assisted the surgeon to dress Mr. Sumner’s head. He gave in this testimony, under oath, before the Congressional Committee:—

“I examined Mr. Sumner’s head, and found two large wounds upon it; and a smaller one under his ear. His hands, his shoulders, and his back were very much bruised. . . . The same licks on an ordinary skull would have smashed right through; they were on the thickest part of the crown. If they had been struck, with half the force, on another part of the head, they would have killed him instantly. I think there is no doubt of this. . . . The left hand had a black lump on it, as large as a butternut. The right hand was hurt. Both his arms and shoulders were black. There was a cut on

his nose ; there was a black streak across both his thighs, made in rising from his desk."

For four years Mr. Sumner was in a state of constant distress and exhaustion, the result of these injuries, — unable to take his seat in the Senate; unable to accomplish any study or work; weakened in the spine; confused by agonizing pains in the head; shaken and enfeebled in the whole nervous system; unable to propel either of his legs, except as he lifted them, one after the other, and pushed them forward, as he walked. To this picture we need only add the medical treatment of Dr. Brown-Séquard. For the sake of counter-irritation, he cauterized him, up and down the back, with burning irons, causing the greatest suffering that can be inflicted by medical practice. For five successive times he burned him, Mr. Sumner refusing to take chloroform, causing the most intense and terrible suffering which Dr. Brown-Séquard "ever had the misfortune to inflict upon animal or man." If this is not the trial by fire, and the agony of the martyr, not for one short convulsion of dying, but for months and years, with a fortitude unshaken, with a self-sacrificing determination unrelaxing, the ruling motive through all, the love of Freedom and the love of man, then I think it would be difficult to define what heroism and martyrdom mean.

VI. What was *the source of Mr. Sumner's attainments and usefulness?* Looking at the accomplishment of great men, we cannot avoid the inquiry, What was the fountain of their power? Aristides was great; he was great because he was just. Alfred was called the Great; it was the tenderness of his spirit and the purity of his life that made him distinguished. Hampden, Pym, Vane, and Cromwell were great; so were George Washington, James Otis, Joseph Warren, Josiah Quincy, Samuel Adams; but in each case the greatness was moral, even more than intellectual; it was devotion to a holy cause; it was total self-abnegation in pursuit of that cause. We explore that mighty river, the Amazon, which becomes almost a fathomless estuary as it empties into the sea, with an intense curiosity following the stream to the

springs of the hill country. We gaze upon the gorgeous cathedrals of Rome or Milan, upon the costly palaces of the noblemen of England, and we are anxious to know the names and the history of the builders. If we can reach the origin of wonderful works; the tuition and the discipline by which the structure was framed; the lessons of mother, or grandmother, or teacher, or friend, that molded the intellect of the child; the books that formed the principles of the youth; the scenery of Nature; the tone of society; the institutions of government; the regimen of the physical life; the religious nurture that formed the conscience; the habits of study and action, early adopted, which went forward into the noble manhood, — we have then found treasures of instruction; we can hope to form another character on the same model; we can hope to build up, out of the children playing by our side, other statesmen, patriots, philanthropists, who shall have the power and attain the usefulness of our departed benefactor. We would train the boys of our households and of our city for a noble, a pure, and a just life. We would put before our young men the picture of this eminent usefulness and admirable virtue, and ask them to emulate it. We would pray to almighty God, most holy and most merciful, to raise up other like patriots for the service of Freedom and of the Commonwealth.

I have spoken of Mr. Sumner's scholarship; of his moral courage; of his sympathy for the poor; of his love of freedom; of his stainless integrity; of his perseverance and his unconquerable will. These were the moral principles from which his greatness sprang, when he had arrived at the age of mature understanding, so as to investigate and choose the rules of life. It is too soon to comprehend all the forces of rain and dew and sunshine that lay around the roots of his character in childhood. I wish that we knew more of his boyhood; of the mother who nursed him at her bosom; of the father who counselled him; of the rules of the house; of the early tastes, and tempers, and studies of the child; of the companions with whom he played; of the ancestral traits

which ran in his blood; of the books which he loved; of the dreams which he dreamed; of the outward influences which determined and helped on the inward vent. These things will be better known hereafter, for his whole course of early discipline will become one of the familiar stories to be told in the ears of our children and our youth. It will inspire them with ardor in the pursuit of good, and with changeless determination in the conquest of evil. We know now that Charles Sumner, the boy, did not struggle with poverty, for the richness of Boston comforts and the abundance of Boston privileges were around all his childhood. He did not fall into any habits of indolence, or vulgarity, or profligacy. He was gently dandled on the knee of love; tenderly watched over by the eye of wisdom; faithfully disciplined in the self-denial and the thoughtfulness of the scholar. We see how Philip Doddridge was trained by pictures and by Bible stories; how Robert Hall learned to read from the inscriptions on the grave-stones, when anxious friends thought it wise to hide from him books; how Walter Scott was nurtured on ballads and histories, in the romantic glens of Scotland; how Patrick Henry fed his young soul, amid the mountains and woods and broad-spreading meadows of Virginia; and we expect to find, in the tuition and history of Charles Sumner, some of these peculiar and memorable agencies, working with a power till then unknown.

VII. And lastly, *God chooses his own instruments to accomplish his own ends.* We should not have expected to find the deliverer of ancient Israel in a little feeble, wailing baby, hid in an ark of bulrushes, on the floating waves of the Nile, watched over by one small, defenceless maiden; rescued from the dangers of the water, and from beasts of prey, by a troop of laughing girls from Pharaoh's court. When General Braddock, of English fame, was sent out to deliver America from the French power, he scorned utterly to receive admonition or hint or aid from a young colonial officer, who had brought forward, in that crisis of danger, some Virginia troops. The Virginia colonel had not been educated in the military schools

of England; he had not fought on the fields of European fame; he had not been thrilled, through body and soul, by personal communion with great warriors and conquerors; he had been a *protégé* of Lord Fairfax in the wilds of Shenandoah,—that was his highest honor; he had led a small regiment of men against marauding Indians,—that was his chief campaign; he had been a surveyor in the woods,—that was his accomplished education; he had been a skirmisher on outposts,—what did he know about military science or war's great exploits? And so Braddock commanded him to stay in the rear, and take care of the baggage; but yet that humble and unobtrusive officer was appointed to save the British honor and the British troops on that memorable day, and to save American independence and American republicanism on other days.

In the year 1860 (a dark hour for American liberties), a convention of earnest men was held in Chicago, to nominate a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and for the leadership of the antislavery hosts. Who should be the man? Some said the great lawyer and ex-governor, Seward, from New York; some said the stalwart, bold, indomitable Wade from Ohio, who debated in the Senate with a pistol by his side, and of whom even Toombs, and Cobb, and Brooks, and Keitt, were afraid; some said this general or that general, this or that skilled administrator, tried in a hundred political battles. But the Lord appointed otherwise. By unseen and unknown trains of thought, all converging to one point; by evidences, and suggestions, and motives gathered from the East and from the West, and so undesignedly as to designate the plain finger of Providence,—the flat-boatman of Kentucky, the rail-splitter of Illinois, the village lawyer of Springfield, Abraham Lincoln by name, was designated to be the saviour of the nation.

Thirty years ago, I began to read, as they were then published in the newspapers, the literary essays of Charles Sumner. They were not frequent in their appearance, but they were of marked characteristics and of extraordinary ability. They were a joy and a hope to every young scholar. Boys in col-

lege, young ministers, lawyers, and physicians, thoughtful merchants, mechanics, farmers, began to say to one another, Here is a *man*; here is an expounder of principles and an originator of thought; here is an ornament of American literature; here is a discourses on law, and ethics, and the relations of learning to both, who will yet give decisions, from the judicial bench, for the world to read. But God had his own work for that young and secluded writer to accomplish. No man then imagined that that pale, shrinking scholar, that that imaginative, retiring student of libraries, that that sensitive, meditative, philosophical, poetical mind, fleeing from public crowds, and delighting only in the studies of the closet, was to be the foremost statesman and debater in America; standing in the front of slavery's battle, on the "perilous, deadly ridge"; a mark for all sharp-shooters; a target for all terrible blows; firm as any covenant of Scotland, or martyr of the ancient church; absolutely impregnable in his argument; absolutely unconquerable in his self-sacrificing will; standing there, beautiful and strong, with his glittering weapons of truth, till freedom's battle was won; then dying, with his harness on, to receive the praises of all discerning men, and a nation's tears.

God chooses his own instruments, and fits them for their work by his own methods. Let us consecrate ourselves to duty, and train our lives for patriotism; let us seek to place before the young higher motives of action and nobler rules of integrity; let us have a firmer trust in God and His providence, assured that He will bring forward, at the proper time, other Washingtons and Lincolns, other Otises and Quincys, other Warrens and Sumners; that He will lead us out of darkness into light, out of political dissension and corruption, into national peace and probity.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1873.

[This sermon illustrates the remarkable grasp which Dr. Foster had of current events. If the preceding discourse suggests his ability in the line of biography and statesmanship, this gives assurance of success had he chosen to give himself to journalism or the writing of history. But what is more to the purpose, it shows how a wise and scholarly minister may utilize the contemporaneous life of the world, so as to compete with the press in interesting his people, and so as to draw religious lessons out of that on which men are thinking, and which to others might seem merely secular. This sermon was followed by a second in the afternoon, made up of brief biographies of the eminent dead of the year. An outline of this second sermon is given on page 172 of the Biographical Sketch.]

Ps. 143:5, 10. "*I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Thy works; teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.*"

I REGARD the year 1873 as having been one of startling admonition and peculiar instructiveness. There are three departments of thought, pertaining to it, to which I invite your attention: its Histories, its Casualties, its Biographies.

I. I ask your attention to the events of the year in *France*. It is not easy to understand the situation in that country of sudden and inconsistent enthusiasms, of rapid alternations, and of bloody conflicts. All may be calm to-day, and in a month or a week the whole nation may be surging in the tumult of revolution or of war. Napoleon III has ended his political life and his natural life, in as deep dishonor as when, by treachery and intrigue, he won the throne of France. Of all the factions of France, the one which circles around Eugenie and her son is the feeblest. After Napoleon fell, Germany ruled France for a space; then the Versailles party, backed by

the army; then the Commune; then Thiers, as president of a provisional government; and now MacMahon is chosen president for seven years. It seems impossible for parties there to crystallize into any unity or fraternity. Six factions at least are in their representative assembly: (1) the Bourbons, under the lead of Count De Chambord; (2) the Orleanists, under Duke D'Aumale; (3) the Imperialists, with Prince Napoleon for their hope; (4) the moderate Republicans, led by Thiers and Favre; (5) the extreme Republicans, under Gambetta; (6) the Reds, or Communists, whose watchword is Death. The least of these parties is the Napoleonists; the next in the minority is the Communists.

From March 20 to May 24, 1871, the Commune held rule. By the destruction of public buildings, of churches, of libraries, of costly monuments, a most atrocious vandalism, their career was marked. A ferocity, a malignity, which knew no pity, no justice, no forbearance, nothing but the ravening for blood, illustrated those sixty-five days of their rule. Archbishop Darboy Boujeau, judge of the Court of Cassation, Abbe Daugerry, and many other innocent citizens, — some in youth, some in white hairs, some in the fulness of their strength, — were ranged against a wall, shot down, and mangled, without any forms of trial, without any pretences of law. It is because all parties are afraid of these reckless, disorganizing murderers that they cannot unite upon any abiding constitution or fixed principles of Republicanism. There are enough friends of liberty to defeat a monarch, and they vote in solid phalanx against the Bourbons. There are enough friends of order to defeat the Reds, and they vote in solid phalanx against those theories which are destructive of property and of life. But they cannot coalesce in permanent fellowship. They are continually checking and counterplotting and counteracting one another; they lack practical talent; they lack mutual confidence; they lack that self-forgetful and self-sacrificing heroism which prefers another's good to their own gratification.

There is one other thing which more than all else they lack,

namely, faith. Count Montalembert, one of the most gifted men of France, a reverent and spiritually-minded Catholic, says of the French nation: "They have wit, they have knowledge, they have genius; but they have not character. Thirty millions of people do not know how to hold fast to a moral foundation. They have lost the political sentiment, both of religion and of their rights. Events are to them inconsistent playthings, passing clouds, mere spectacles; the past they have not mastered; the future has for them no secrets." This is a deplorable state of mind for any nation. You may judge of their reverence and their faith in the Christian religion, compared with the reverence of the English mind, by a fact which happened a few years ago. The governor-general of India proposed to restore the gates of a heathen temple; one universal cry of indignation saluted him from all England. The same year, a son of Louis Philippe laid the corner-stone of a mosque, to be rebuilt on foreign soil; not a breath of remonstrance came from any part of France,—it was regarded as a very pleasant joke.

Take another fact. In London it requires only one garrison and three small battalions and two squadrons, to keep two millions of men in order. Why? Go into London on Sunday, and you will see the cause. The whole population are obedient to the church-bells. Immense throngs are seen going to the house of God. Quiet, stillness, reverence, and home-bred delights are everywhere. There is a law of God, above the law of bayonets; there is a police arrangement of the soul, beyond the crash of artillery. London has mighty enterprise, but it is obedient to religion. It is the central depot and the central disbursing fountain of all commerce. Five divisions of the globe disembark there daily their produce. But this illimitable business, and these innumerable interests, are all hushed, one day in seven, to wait for God's instructions.

Now, go to Paris on the Sabbath. Two armies, forty thousand troops of the line and sixty thousand National Guards, are patrolling that city to keep it subdued and safe. I take the following particulars, as to the keeping of the Sabbath in

Paris, from a statement of Rev. Dr. Maxwell, of Cincinnati, after his return from travels in France. He says:—

“I have spent Sabbaths in many of the capitals of Europe, and I will describe a Sabbath in Paris.

“After breakfast, we walked the length of the Rue St. Honoré, one of the important business streets of Paris. In the whole extent of the walk, nothing reminds us that it is the Sabbath. Omnibuses, cabs, all public vehicles, seem thicker than usual. More people are on the streets than usual, with little or no change of dress. Not a shop is shut; the shopkeepers are as busy as ever with their work. Hawkers of fruit, vegetables, and notions, with their wares on little hand-carts, are vociferating through the streets. Movements of troops, with trains of artillery, are taking place. The bazaars, butchers’ stalls, and drinking-places are all open. Where building is going on, no sound of the hammer has ceased. Not a sign reminds one that it is the Lord’s day. From nine o’clock till twelve, there is more or less church-going by the women and old people; but as the service consists mainly of a series of masses, by a sort of changing guard in the shops, many attend mass once in the forenoon, and the business still goes on at home.

“In the afternoon, business is suspended, the churches are deserted, and all out-doors is alive with men, women, and children, seeking pleasure. The current bears us first into the gardens of the Tuileries, which are open and full of people. From these gardens, the living stream pours on into the ‘Place Concorde,’ and thence into the ‘Champs Elysees.’ Here a stranger would think that some special fair was being celebrated. Cake and fruit stands meet you at every step. All manner of games are in progress. Young men are at ball-play, running races, practising gymnastic feats. On all these things young and old seem as earnestly intent as possible. You would think of nothing but our Fourth of July, only you cannot conceive of the frantic energy with which all Paris precipitates itself into outdoor amusements, on Sabbath afternoon.

“We venture out again in the evening. Fewer people are on the streets, for they are now engaged with indoor amusements. We pass the circus, an immense building, crowded to the top. The coffee-houses and restaurants in the ‘Palais Royal,’ and along the boulevards, are full. About the doors, crowds are sitting, sipping their coffee and small glasses of brandy. Sabbath evening is the harvest-time for theatres and operas in Paris. The ball-rooms are crowded, also. These

are a noted feature of the city. We pass by the largest of these, and glance in at the door. There seem to be about a thousand on the spacious floor, giddy with the glare of light, and fumes of wine, and movements of the waltz. These dancing halls, of which there are many in Paris, all full on Sabbath night, are the very doors of hell."

Poor, unhappy France! unbelieving, disorganizing, immoral; departing from sacred covenants; breaking family ties; heedless of the Revelation; holding loosely political guarantees; witty and pleasure-loving; intellectual and scientific; with bursts of eloquence; with fascination of manners; with versatility of talent; with victorious dashes in war; with proud memories of military glory; with a land of vines and flowers, of milk and honey, of riches and beauty,—but fickle and false, infidel and scandalous; the judgments of God resting upon it; lacking self-denial; lacking faith in Christ, and rushing upon sterner histories and darker days.

How different the state of mind in this American Republic, and what occasion for gratitude have we in this marked and memorable difference! Here laws and institutions are cherished; here the supremacy of the reason over the appetites is maintained; here duty is higher and nobler than pleasure, and legal reverence, public order, the spirit of obedience are maintained. It is the precious legacy of our fathers; it is the holy teaching of the Bible. Here is a veneration for the Constitution, which some call idolatry, but which is the chief bulwark of our freedom. Violent political discussions, party heats, unforeseen agitations, sudden factions, may arise, and their influence may seem to be sweeping irresistibly over the land. But we have an anchor; we have settled principles; we can hold to foundations. Still, the congressional statute is law; still, the judicial bench is revered; still, the executive decision of the President and his Cabinet is final, until the legislative authority changes the law. We are a government of laws, and not of men. With calm convictions that faith in the Bible and religious self-control are the only sure basis of financial security, of equal rights, and of republican perpetuity, we hold

to the old anchors. Thank God that we are likely to hold for some decades and centuries longer!

II. I turn to the signs of progress in *Italy*. The steps of gradation have been manifest for many years. A constitution was given to a portion of Italy in March, 1848, by Charles Albert of Piedmont, declaring that in that province there should be no disfranchisement for religion. This ordinance was ratified, on his accession to the throne, by Victor Emmanuel. In 1850, the "Siccardine laws" were passed; they were introduced by Count Siccardi, by the advice and counsel of Cavour, placing priests on the same footing with other citizens, and abolishing ecclesiastical tribunals for the trial of civil causes. In 1855, Ratazzi, minister of state, still counseled by Cavour, suppressed certain religious communities, giving their income to the poor clergy, thus equalizing civil and religious privileges. In 1856, Cavour formed an alliance with the Western Powers at the Congress of Paris, bringing in new Protestant guarantees and the Protestant love of freedom. Immediately upon this, the war between Austria and Prussia followed, terminating in seven weeks, and Italy was liberated from her chains. In 1860 came the federation of the Italian states, Cavour and Garibaldi leading, and all but Venice and Rome acquiescing. In 1861, Venice and Rome were added to the alliance; the states were combined into one united, constitutional kingdom; the first Italian parliament was held, and civil and religious freedom for all Italy was proclaimed. The pope's spiritual headship was allowed, but he was deprived of his temporal authority. In 1870 came the war between France and Prussia; it ended by giving a new victory to Protestant principles, by the consent of all the foreign powers, even of Austria and France and Spain, to the Italian confederation of states. In May, 1871, was enacted the law of papal guarantees, asserting religious liberty and fixing bounds to papal authority. Religious toleration is established; temporal penalties for spiritual offences are abolished; the right of suffrage and the right of holding office are unrestricted; the freedom of discussion and the freedom of worship are granted; the priest or the layman

may stand up boldly and defy the Inquisition; in short, religious liberty, by the decree of law, is given to Italy as fully as to England. It is a great and marvelous gain.

It is true that the pope and the councils, and the large portion of the priesthood, violently protest against these changes, and assert the claim of temporal sovereignty, and the right to use military and civil forces and secular penalties, to compel obedience to spiritual edicts. The recent encyclical letters of the pope have astonished the world for their arrogant and their illimitable claims. The pope has excommunicated Bishop Reinkens, one of the Old Catholics of Germany. He has placed his prohibition on the works of such an eminent philanthropist and devout saint as Montalembert. His emissaries are busy throughout the whole realm of Italy, intriguing for the restoration of the old *régime*. The messages of the Vatican are cheering on the Monarchists in France. Hyacinthe and Dollinger, and others of the reforming party, are in front of a subtle foe. Rev. Mr. Pressensé of Paris, says, "Religious questions are assuming a prominent place in our home and foreign policy; and crusades against liberty are preached by the Romanist clergy, in a ruthless spirit, in religious circulars, in episcopal letters, in conversations, and even from the pulpit." Disraeli, late premier of England, in his recent Glasgow speech, declares his belief that "a great and bloody religious war is impending in Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, England, America; a war which shall shake the foundations of all states, and try the faith of all consecrated souls."

It may be so. The forces of Gog and of Magog are gathering, and forging new weapons of war, and putting on their armor. Infidelity was never so bold, so confident, so aggressive, so unparalleled in the charms of literature and the defences of science. The friends of Christ, in my judgment, are assuming a false and dangerous unconcern. They are crying "Peace, peace! liberalism, liberalism!" They are spreading out the mantle of charity over all forms of error; they are tolerating and even praising, and their children are reading, this poisoned literature, where the gall of asps is under the flowers of

poetry, and the deadly strychnine mingles with brilliant discourses of science; they are pushing on the wooden horse, which conceals armed men, into the midst of the sacred city. The pope has his emissaries, and infidelity has its unconscious supporters, not far from our blessed firesides and our sacred altars. The Bible question in our schools, the Sunday question in its relation to libraries and railroads and machine-shops and public sports, the temperance question as involving the right of prohibition, are all becoming the battle-ground where popery, and infidelity, and worldly ambitions, and irreverent defiance, range themselves on the one side, and spiritually-minded Christians surely ought to stand on the other. "Sunday laws," says a recent convention of twenty-one German societies in Cincinnati, "are in conflict both with the constitution of the State and of the United States, and cannot legally be enforced." We seem to be going backward in the matter of Bible-reading in our schools, forgetting that the Bible was the foundation of the State in the beginning; that all our virtues are built upon it, and all our liberties; that it has maintained its unshaken place, by the consent of all parties, as the corner-stone of our moral integrity; and that we cannot cast it out of our schools without casting out the faith of the people in its inspiration. The Romanists demand a denominational system of schools, and the opportunity of taking their own proportion of the tax and using it for their own sectarian tenets. Infidelity demands the rejection of the Bible as a sign of scorn against all religion. Are we not in imminent danger of retrogression?

The denominational scheme has been tried in Canada, and in three provinces of the New Dominion; it has signally failed and been surrendered. In Australia they are adopting the undenominational plan, taxing all, putting all on the same footing, and it is found to have admirable results. In Spain and Italy, the governments of both countries are taking away schools from the church, and putting them into the administrative control of the state. Austria herself, after her defeat in the seven-weeks' war, saw the defect of her school education,

long in the hands of Catholic hierarchies, called together a congress of two thousand teachers, resolved to adopt the undenominational plan, giving an equal right of instruction to all religions and all classes, casting out special privileges; and already the national mind feels the spring. Switzerland, with twenty-five cantons, is made up of commingling races and of two prevailing religions; yet her school system is independent; all children are required to attend the schools, and to yield to the same discipline and instruction, without regard to sects; and great thoroughness and practical efficiency attend that course. In France they are asking for unsectarian, national schools. Their far-seeing statesmen feel that there is little chance for national elevation or for a constitutional republic, so long as there is an ignorant peasantry without hope in the country, and a vast throng of workmen without thought in the city; and that by the intellectual quickening and discipline of the whole population, taking off religious restrictions, and giving to them equality of right, and by that means alone, can they exalt the nation. England is going through a bitter sectarian, dangerous conflict over their new school-boards, and if they cannot relinquish denominational plans, they are likely to engender new strifes and to incur new mischiefs.

We have stood thus far on an elevated platform; shall we go down into the dark region of controversial bitterness, where self-conceit and rationalism are our light, and where the sun of God's Revelation shines no more? Sir Philip Sidney said to Queen Elizabeth of the courage which animated the Netherlands against Philip II, "It is the spirit of the Lord, and is invincible." So may it be said of us, if we draw our principles from the Word of God and from the throne of grace. So may it be said of the battles of freedom, waged by believing hearts and by eloquent tongues, in any land, whether by Castelar in Spain, or by Montalembert in France, or by Reinkens in Germany, or by Cavour in Italy, or by Hyacinthe in Geneva. Only let them and us be careful to wield the genuine, glittering sword of God's Word. Our human instruments are blunt and weak. They have no power

to pierce the fortifications of infidelity, or to cast down the muniments of rock, thrown up around the sovereignty of the pope.

III. We may mark the progress of affairs in *Spain*, a country that has made, during the year, decisive advancement. She has established a republic, and has placed at its head Señor Castelar, a man who would be remarkable, in any country and in any age, for his self-forgetful and heroic devotion to the principles of liberty. Already he and his counsellors have introduced important reforms, especially in the matter of education. The secular instruction of the schools is taken away from the church, and put into the administrative control of the state. Teachers are selected by the state; education is made literary and scientific; discussion is free; worship is free. Each man may choose his religion by the dictates of his own conscience. He may guide his religious life by the reading of the Bible, by discussion with friends, by holy influences of the Sabbath, by voluntary worship of the sanctuary,—not by school dictation nor by priestly usurpation. This is a great gain. The Carlists are moved by a fierce superstition, and are carrying on an intolerant religious persecution. Two other factions are contending against the republic in Spain, and it may be overthrown. Castelar has infinite difficulties.

At this interesting juncture of Spanish affairs, an occasion of disagreement, and it may be of war, has sprung up between this government and the Spanish republic, greatly to the regret of every lover of liberty and of progress. The *Virginus*, a buccaneering vessel, sent out on a piratical expedition under false colors, has been captured by Cuban officers and by her naval troops. Doubtless, by this measure, Spain has encroached upon the independence of the seas; but the *Virginus* herself had now flagrantly encroached upon the laws of neutrality. The ship is sunk; but important questions are yet to come before our legal authorities to determine the character of her owners and of her crew and of her papers and of her flag. There is no doubt that Cuban agents have

been active in New York city; that foreigners, with no valid right, have used our flag to violate our neutrality laws, and to provoke war with another nation. We cannot demand any further concession, when, by the negligence of our officers, we have violated the plighted faith of nations. We cannot be insensible to the great difficulties under which Castelar and his cabinet have acted. We cannot doubt that General Cushing, whose knowledge of Spain is complete, whose knowledge of international law is wide and profound, whose remarkable ability as diplomatist has been more than once tested, will carry us through these narrow straits, where two seas meet.

Let us not provoke war with this new Spanish republic, a government starting under such happy omens, not only for Spain, but for the triumph of Christian doctrine and for the progress of all the nations. Even if the *Virginius* were a merchantman, on a voyage of legitimate trade; if the papers and the flag and the invoices, and the dialect of the crew, and the testimony of the officers, and the whole circle of the evidences, had proved her to be on a friendly mission and within the defences of our law; still, remember that Generals Burriel and Jovellar are but half-taught in the code of an enlightened administration; that they rule over fierce and savage tempers, less instructed and more prejudiced than themselves. Remember that Castelar and his counsellors have made concessions, have given up the ship, have restored the prisoners, have acknowledged haste and error. Remember that republicanism is drawing its new-born breath in Spain, and do not strangle that infant of a day. Do not provoke war, — consider its immeasurable crime, which must rest somewhere; consider its infinite evils, which will fall upon both parties. Exercise magnanimity and forbearance. Do not think that war with any country is a trifle in its injury, or its expense, or its shock to the conscience of the world. We have just passed through one war, with the general sympathy of all the monarchies against the North, and with the general expectation that republicanism was to be crushed. Let us not

again awaken the joy of tyrannies and of aristocracies and of all haters of liberty. Let us not think it an easy thing to subjugate Cuba, nor a desirable thing to place this island gem in our coronet of stars. We call it the "Gem of the Antilles"; but its brightness is of the earth and the air and the sky, its perennial flowers and fruits, its sea-girt breezes, its genial sunshine; it is not in the character of its inhabitants.

"There every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

True religion, and the manners and the education and the aims of the people, are wholly foreign and incongruous to us. Its institutions and its laws cannot be woven in with ours. Set it among our stars, — it would be but a baleful light, a meteor strange and portentous, rushing athwart every orbit of regular and blessed progress. Doubtless General Sheridan, or General Forrest of Fort Pillow memory, might lead a conquering army through those picturesque scenes of Nature. But do we wish to train our Southern brethren in the love of military glory and in the further practice of war? Do we wish to sacrifice any more of our brothers and sons to this bloody Moloch? Do we wish to follow the example of Great Britain, when that government loosed the Alabama from a neutral port, under the flag of a professed friend, to prey upon our commerce? Have we not just learned a significant lesson on this question of filibustering, and gone through a long and painful course of controversy and diplomacy, in order to prepare our minds to understand our duty? I trust the danger of war is wholly passed; still, one or two points in the negotiation are not fully settled, and there are journals on both sides which are stirring up angry strife.

It is not for us to speculate about the ultimate fate of Cuba or of San Domingo or of Mexico or of the Canadas. They may be absorbed in our on-rushing tide of industry, enterprise, freedom; or they may not. They may assert and maintain their own independence, with equal privileges to themselves and less danger to us. We cannot assume the preroga-

tive of fore-knowledge and of fate; much less can we introduce the jar which war occasions, changing all forms of law and order, dislocating courses of history, bringing over a land the red and lurid clouds of crime and death, unless the finger of Justice immutable, and of Mercy, whose eyes are wet with pity, points unequivocally the way. I close what I have to say on the subject of Spain, in the words of Castelar himself. In a debate in the Spanish parliament, Manterola, canon of Vittoria, denounced freedom of worship, and eulogized the papal authority, referring to memorials of the past. Castelar replied:—

“I have seen the memorials and the ruins of Rome,—its three hundred domes; its basilica of St. Peter’s; its Holy Week; its sacred altars and its sacred ashes; its gigantic sybils of Michael Angelo; its fresco of the French emissaries, who sent the head of Coligny to the Pope; its apotheosis of the ecclesiastical glories of the executioners, the assassins of St. Bartholomew’s Eve. I have sought in these for faith; I have found only deceit and doubt. Great is God in Sinai. The thunder precedes him; the lightning accompanies him; the light envelops him; the earth trembles; the mountains fall in pieces. But greater is the God of Calvary, nailed to the cross, wounded with a spear, crowned with thorns, the life-blood ebbing, and yet saying, ‘Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!’ Great is the religion of immutable Justice, but greater is the religion of pardoning Love. And in the name of that religion, I ask you to write on your laws and your Constitution, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!”

IV. And what shall we say of *Turkey*? Is that ancient and semi-barbarian empire to be overthrown or to be perpetual? Is its influence favorable to the liberties of the world and to the spread of Christian doctrine, or adverse? If the Turkish empire falls, which are the kingdoms and which the nations that are to be benefited? If it is christianized, and its mighty political and educational enginery is turned to work for Christ, then its power of spreading the truth and of fortifying the arguments of faith is almost illimitable. The Turkish power, established in the Middle Ages, and long overwhelming in military strength, has awakened the deep interest

of the historian, as well as of the theological reasoner who studies the annals of the church. The Saracen was early conquered by the Turk; and the Turk was subdued by the Tartar; and the blended power of Turkish and Tartaric dynasties was long resisted by the Greeks. When at last the Greeks were defeated in 1453, the Turks still ravaged Eastern Europe for two hundred years. They have been a wandering and predatory people, fond of the hunt more than of agriculture; dwelling in tents more than in cities; propagating their religion by the sword, not by the arguments of the reason. They have forty millions of people,—ten millions in Africa; seventeen millions Mussulmans; eleven millions of the Greek and Armenian churches; one million Christians and Jews.

One hundred and fifty churches of American missionary origin are now planted in that land. And doubtless the influence, now spreading most rapidly, and most likely to leaven the whole lump of society, and to transform the whole organization of the state, is that of the churches established and sustained by the American Board. Russia looks on with eager eyes, ready to snatch at Constantinople. France is neither asleep nor indifferent, as to the destiny of Turkey. England stands firm, and with armed front, to hold the balance of power. Austria has lands outlying upon the Turkish borders, and is meditating when to strike. The fall of Turkey would be the convulsion of the world. The christianization of Turkey would be the most glorious triumph which Christ has won in the modern ages. That beautiful land around the Black Sea and the Marmora; that bay on which Constantinople is built; that harbor where a thousand navies might ride at anchor; that city of oriental splendor and fame, the *entrepôt* for all commerce; that clime of unfading flowers and of salubrious airs; that kingdom of renown, powerful in the seventh century, when learning and thought turned thitherward for refuge; eager and proud in the fifteenth century, which was the period of discovery; still encamping in barbaric strength, and fortified with military skill against all comers; now searching after the knowledge

of the modern science, and the inventions of the modern art; that empire, with the beauty and the glory of hoary hairs upon its head, may yet become the kingdom of our Lord, the Cross set up as its sign of power; the crescent, a waning moon, going down in the western sky. In that land the spirit of inquiry is everywhere aroused. The beauty of a Christian civilization is everywhere admitted. Thousands of minds are emancipated theoretically from error. Souls are convicted of sin; heathen are converted to Christ; seeds of truth are planted, and germs of righteousness are springing, which shall hereafter shake like Lebanon. Citadels of Christian power and homes of Christian beauty are there set up, in the midst of Satan's thrones; and those thrones, like Dagon of old, are tottering to their fall. Is not this garden of the world, long overgrown with thorns, again to blossom as the rose, under the quickening impulse of American ideas, under the preaching of American missionaries, and the sway of Gospel truth? If Spain and France and Italy are even now republican; if England and Prussia and the lesser states of Germany are shaken to their deep foundation by theories of representative government; if Portugal and Austria and every other autocratic empire rocks and reels in its seat of power, before the breezes of freedom that are sweeping over the world, — how long, think you, before the Sultan of Turkey and the Shah of Persia and the Khedive of Egypt and the Sheiks of Arabia and the chieftains of every tribe will hear the rush of those winds of liberty, of those gales of heaven, and will be carried by them upward, towards the pure, millennial civilization? It may not be permitted to us to plant republics there; it may not be the form of government best adapted to that people; but the faith of Christ is the crown of glory to all kindreds and tongues. There, let the light of Christian knowledge be kindled; there, let the incense of a pure worship be offered; and then what power of holy propagandism shall go with that race! Mightier than the sword of Mohammed; mightier than the learning of the Arabians; mightier than the fierce passions of Vandal tribes, in their original onslaught upon the Turkish

empire; mightier than the blended power of Saracen and Tartar and Turk and Greek; mightier than the crash of arms in the Crimea, when England and France and Turkey and Russia met in the bloody fray,—shall that wave of evangelization spread, from Constantinople outward, over Asia and Africa and Europe and the Isles of the Sea!

V. I wish to refer to the death, during the year, of two men, great in the realm of science and of intellectual philosophy,—*Louis Agassiz* and *John Stuart Mill*. Mr. Mill is thought by many to be one of the most gifted writers of the nineteenth century. I cannot so regard him. But I admit that in some departments of writing he is startling and powerful, and that two of his books, on *Liberty* and on *Representative Government*, have important political principles. But his reasonings reject the Revelation of God, and are founded only on natural instincts and intuitions. He has little or no reverence for any law, or institution, or custom; for any sacred memory, or any historic grandeur. The Scriptures of course did not bind him, and he claimed that he might “set aside the ordinances of society,” and this he did, openly and boldly, in his domestic relations.

As a contrast to the sad unbelief of Mill, an infidelity which weakens his strength, and confuses his mind, and well-nigh destroys the value of his writings, we may adduce the splendid example of *Louis Agassiz*, our own great scientific writer, so recently deceased. He was a man of more accurate science, in all departments of natural philosophy better informed, and wider and deeper in thought, than *Stuart Mill*. On questions of politics and metaphysics, Mr. Mill was a larger student; but these are the exact questions, with regard to which Comte and all the Positivists declare nothing certain can be known. They fall back upon the relations of science and the observations of nature for theological conclusions, and here Agassiz’ knowledge and discernment and argument are immeasurably superior to those of Mill. Mill denies the Revelation, and denies natural religion. Agassiz recognizes the creative agency, and the constant interposition and personal will of God.

Louis Agassiz, of Huguenot descent, looking back to an ancestral line of six generations of Protestant ministers, educated in the great seminaries of Germany, had already attained a continental fame, as an original explorer and discoverer in science, before he came to this country. That reputation he has carried forward, that knowledge he has perfected, in this land, year by year and day by day. He has established a museum of zoölogical and physiological history, the most valuable of the world. It has eight laboratories, with an accomplished professor for each; with twenty-eight laborers constantly employed; with original investigations going on continually; searching into the secrets of nature, throwing new light on dark problems, bringing the material and the theological relations of science into a more perfect system, everywhere strengthening the argument for the being and personal will of God. That museum and its arrangements of professional duty and of experimental science is carried forward at an expense of \$80,000 yearly.

No one who reads Agassiz' last published article in the January number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, will doubt his power to range through the whole field of animal life and of geological fossil remains. No one will doubt his power to analyze and to judge of the prevalent Darwinian theories, as to the origin of man, as to the incessant workings of God's providence and God's will in man's history. Those most fanciful ideas of a monkey ancestry, those supposed laws of the change of species by natural selection, evolution, and development, those ascriptions of power to blind law, those infidel attacks upon the doctrine of God's government over men, and of Christ's redemption of human souls, are laid prostrate by Agassiz, as the weeds of the meadow are cut by the mower's scythe. The expense of the museum may seem extraordinary, and the value of these zoölogical discoveries may to some minds appear doubtful. But it is the study of a life-time; it is the victory of a sublime genius; it is the expense of gathering specimens from thousands of miles, of preserving them with costly materials, of publishing books to advance the science, of paying

the salary of teachers, of keeping up the whole series of experimental processes at Cambridge.

It is marvelous; it is an honor to the Republic, especially to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; it is a discipline of mind, and quickening of education, for the whole land, and for the future ages. It gives to every school-house a larger field, a higher motive, and a richer result. It opens mysteries, and acquaints us with God. It gives to every minister and to every church an evidence and argument, by which the mouth of the scoffer may be silenced; the grovellings of the sensualist checked; the glory of God revealed. We know, from multiplied sources, from the history of man, from the doctrine of the Revelation, from the sacrifice of Christ, from the confessed experiences of regenerate souls, that there is a violent opposition to the government of God abroad in the world. We know that infidelity, and scorn, and worldly lusts are doing their utmost to overthrow religious principles and high-toned moral purity; and that, with a multitude of souls, they are deplorably successful. We would build impregnable walls around our liberties, our religion, our virtue. We would defend the state, the family, the church. We would plant a holy, self-denying resolve in every heart, and fix that determination beyond the assault of appetite, or earthly lures, or Satan's treacheries. We would lead bewildered souls to Christ, and as helpful to this great end, we welcome with exceeding joy all allies like Agassiz, all supporters of the true science, which acknowledges God and reverences the Bible.

I come back, for a moment, to those defects and blemishes which so greatly mar the influence of John Stuart Mill. Those defects are perfectly obvious to one who understands the laws of the higher education. He was a disorganizing critic; seeking for faults in established systems; looking to see where he could tear down, not where he could build up; or, if he attempted to build, constructing out of odd, uncouth, incoherent views of the human mind. Such men always find cracks in a building, and defects of architecture where it

might seem as if you could build a better house, and tinder with which to kindle fires, and combustible materials in human edifices, so that it is easy to burn down a village or a city. Mr. Mill says that "the amount of eccentricity in a society is in proportion always to the genius and the mental vigor which it contains." This is a dangerous and a fatal proposition. It is the rock on which Mr. Mill's principles of honor and of duty strike, so that his hopes of usefulness go down in the deep sea buried. Let any man imagine that the past is an empty record; that no great truths have been discovered; that no important principles have been established; that eccentricity and strangeness of opinion and conduct are the test of a great mind, and he is as sure to waste his powers in foolish, quixotic, abortive undertakings as he is to live.

I have known something of these quixotic speculations and these theological bush-whackers. Several have fallen within my personal knowledge, even more intimately than I could have desired. Their cry was, "Reform everything!" No accepted opinion, no natural custom, no prevalent habit is right; get up a new fashion of clothes, and wear bloomers; alter the constitution of your society, and bring in something totally different from your present debates and essays; overthrow your classical and mathematical education, and ask the ancient pagans, or the modern gymnasts, for a substitute; separate families, and inaugurate free love; overthrow the laws, and get some new legislation; break down the church, and set up a Brook Farm; spurn the Bible, reject Christ, and take David Hume for your guide into the dark unknown. I sat at the table with one of these infidel reformers for a year of my college life, and these speculations were iterated and reiterated in my ear, till I was tired, and faint, and distressed. Early in my ministry, the whole matter came up again. Another of these reformers was a member of my church. The *Herald of Freedom*, the editorials of which were among the strongest and most ingenious infidel writings of the century, was widely read in my congregation. It became my duty, with personal reluctance and with infinite pain, to go through a course of

discipline and of excommunication with these followers of infidelity. The whole argument was canvassed, in epistolary correspondence, in church meetings, in private conversations, before ecclesiastical councils. It is no egotism for me to say, that I am familiar with these unbelieving and disorganizing sophistries. I have been compelled to study them, against my will. I most affectionately and earnestly warn the beloved youth of this congregation against them. Many of those speculations are plausible and fascinating. They claim to be scientific and poetic, and they have a charm for the scholarly. They introduce novelties; they strike out on intellectual adventures; they have a power over the energetic and the bold. I implore you to beware of the irreligious and pernicious literature which is so rife in our country and times; I implore you to reject the infidel conclusions of John Stuart Mill and his coadjutors. Be ye followers of Agassiz, of Hugh Miller, of David Brewster, of Edward Hitchcock, of Benjamin Silliman, of Mrs. Somerville, of Caroline Herschel, of men and women whose science has honored God, not of the destroyers of faith. Be ye followers of Christ, and then shall you have opportunity of studying science, with higher advantages in heaven.

METHODS OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE.

[The following sermon was first preached in the John-street Church, in September, 1867, at a united service of the Congregational Churches. It was also preached at Malden, Mass., in 1871. It has biographical value as an unconscious exhibition of Dr. Foster's own inner religious life. He was thoroughly a spiritually-minded man, as this sermon, evidently written from his heart, shows most plainly. It must not be supposed, from the miscellaneous and partially secular character of the sermons already inserted, that such was the prevailing peculiarity of his preaching. On the contrary, his utterances were singularly devout and spiritual, and this discourse is a specimen of his ordinary pulpit efforts, in its taking up the familiar old truths of the every-day Gospel,—just those truths which every man needs to hear over and over again,—and putting them in the golden setting of his own choice words. Dr. Foster avoided novelties in the pulpit; he never strained after effect, and the words which follow show how admirably he succeeded in making the old truths fresh and attractive. The closing illustration of the sermon is a brief but accurate description of Lowell, as he saw it daily from the windows of his home on the hill-side. He was a keen observer of the busy manufacturing city in which he dwelt, and its buildings, its machinery, its canals, its bridges, its industries in all their great diversity, were constantly suggesting to him appropriate and forcible illustrations.]

JUDE 20:21. — “*Keep yourselves in the love of God.*”

“KEEP yourselves in the love of God.” Here the apostle strikes upon the grand characteristic of the Christian, the indwelling and ever-vital principle of action, which rules over every affection and aim. It is man's chief end to know God and to glorify Him. It is the characteristic of the impenitent mind, that it forgets God and loves inferior things. Business, family, friends, occupy the thoughts. Scholarship, ingenuity, mental progress, engage the heart. Ambition, glory, fame, enlist desire. Pleasure, vanity, folly, absorb attention. Some one or more of these objects come between the soul and God, and shut out the light of his benignant countenance. It is the characteristic of the broken-hearted believer, that his affections are recalled from their wanderings, back to God. It is the

characteristic of the consistent Christian, that he loves God with ever-increasing devotion; that he thinks of Him with ever-new delight; that he pants for fellowship with Him with intense desire; that nothing can satisfy him, nothing can comfort him, so long as the light of God's countenance is hidden from him.

I. *Why should we cherish supreme love to God?* Because God is worthy of our supreme affection. He is the only pure, wise, all-loving, all-powerful Being in the universe. We are constantly seeking after an ideal of excellence. Where is the perfect man? Where is the true-hearted patriot? Where is the discerning statesman? Where is the proved and faithful friend? Where is the matchless saint, whose life corresponds with the principles he avows? We cannot find the perfect man. We cannot, by any sketches of the reason, or by any pictures of the imagination, so combine the qualities of goodness as to form an ideal of perfection. God alone is perfect. The Revelation draws the portrait. The whole creation corroborates the doctrine. The entire history of the world brings in its testimonies. God is perfect. The character and government of God satisfy the thoughts, and lift them, as on wings, to sublimest meditations.

God is worthy of our love, as the one only Fountain of life, light, and joy; as the eternal, self-existent, immutable Jehovah; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; one in three, and three in one; Supreme Governor of men and worlds; possessed of all glorious attributes; directing all things by natural law, and by daily providences, which are the manifestation of His immediate will, which interweave their constant action, never in conflict, but always in agreement with law. His watchful care of us has no precedent nor parallel in earthly histories.

He loved us, and gave His Son to die for us, while we were yet enemies. He waits, long and patiently, for our repentance. He orders His eternal counsels, and all earthly dispensations, for our spiritual good. Surely, we ought to love God. Infinite perfections draw us to Him. Infinite benefits impose their obligation. Promises of an infinite reward enhance the

claim. If there be any clear perception of duty, or any gratitude, or virtue, or praise, how can we fail to cherish for Him a sincere, intense, ever-increasing love?

II. *How shall we maintain this love?*

1. In order to keep yourselves in the love of God, you must *have an unfaltering perseverance*, resisting the temptations of the world. If God gives you prosperity in business, do not let the cares of life, and the deceitfulness of riches, enter in and choke the heavenly word. Do not multiply your engagements, so that you have not time for secret and public and family prayer. Do not so far absorb the mind with anxious secularities, do not so far overtask and weary the mind with toil, that you are disqualified for the service to which God calls. Remember that God has an indefeasible claim upon your time. You must have leisure for reflection, to keep the flame of piety alive in your own soul. You must have hours of every day consecrated to God, for prayers, for spiritual growth, and for the conversion of your fellow-men. With a diligent thoughtfulness, and with a resolute self-control, you must carry the spirit of the Sabbath into the week. You kindle a fire on your hearth-stone every morning; you cannot bury a coal in ashes, and then find it after seven days. No more can you take the coal which the seraphim have brought from the altar of God, to warm your heart on the Sabbath, and bury it up in worldly affections and worldly occupations, and then find it alive and glowing on the following Sabbath. You must walk with God every day. You must give to God some direct, conscious, deliberate service of the mind and of the hands every day, or worldliness will take away the life of your piety, your hopes will fade, and you will be left, like the barren heath, on which neither rain nor dew descended. It is needful for you, my brethren, in order to escape the taint and the torment of earthly-mindedness, that you should have special seasons of earnest, unbroken, religious culture. There were pentecostal times of old, when the disciples were with one accord in one place; and there they continued in conference

and prayer and supplication, till the windows of heaven were opened, and the gracious rain descended. It is accordant with the nature of mind ; it is accordant with the methods of the wise men of this world, taken to awaken general enthusiasm ; it is accordant with the uniform history of the Church, to present the truth with reiterated, persistent effort, in order to stir up one another's pure minds, and to bring down, by communion of thought and by blended prayers, the blessing of heaven.

2. In order to keep yourselves in the love of God, it is necessary, still further, *to secure the advantages of Christian fellowship*. Reflect upon the amazing influence which religious conversation has upon the mind. God has constituted all minds with certain great resemblances, and has given to the Christian character, unity of faith and aims and experiences. Yet there is diversity of thought and of emotion, and so much of diversity as to make the dependence of one Christian mind upon another, and of one Christian heart upon another, very great. You know the principle of division of labor, which holds in all mechanic trades and manual toils. The farmer would be insane who should think himself competent to make his own hat and shoes and clothing and house, and implements of agriculture, and do all his other work besides. The scholar would be wholly bewildered and misguided, who should think to be a universal genius, compassing all sciences and all arts. This inability grows out of the limitations of our knowledge, out of the diversity of our tastes, out of the dissimilarity of our talents, out of the high appointment of God, by which man is designed to be the helper of his fellow-man. In the Christian life we are mutually dependent, and shall be to the end. Let us not think to shut ourselves up in our shell, and there grow ; we shall attain only the growth of the snail or the oyster. Let us not imagine that, like the eremites of the desert or like the hermits of the cave, we can fence ourselves away from society, and cultivate spirituality, and walk with God. Our piety must have the sun and the air and the rain and the wind, in order to a healthy growth, as

much as the wheat and the corn. God gives to His children diverse tendencies, experiences, gifts of mind. One has a bent towards logical thought, and argument and philosophic relations appear in all his talk. Another gathers up facts, events, statistics, and historical information is poured out largely from his conversation and remarks. A third has poetic imagination, and his thoughts glow with the brightness of analogical illustration. A fourth has deep emotion, and he cannot speak, when God has poured His sanctifying grace into his soul, without awakening profound sympathy. Similar diversity occurs, in Christians, as to the points of doctrine which interest them. One has had a fearful force of passion to subdue, has found himself well-nigh conquered by strong propensities and by evil habits; his conversation is very likely to dwell upon the danger, the guilt, the tyranny of sin. Another is a deep student of principles, of relations, of laws; he seeks to harmonize the doctrines of the Bible; he would fain unlock the deep mysteries of nature and of grace; he discourses of the high things of God's kingdom, and of the deep things of the soul. Still another is of a confiding nature. He has never been troubled by doubt; he has a cheerful, hopeful temperament; trials and difficulties and conflicts pass him by on velvet feet; his heart is full of love and joy; he has assurance of faith, and his mouth is full of thanksgiving to his Redeemer. A thousand persons may examine some obscure problem of doctrine or of duty, and each one of the thousand may take some particular view which no other one of the thousand has thought of. All this implies no weakness of the evidences of truth, but only their multiplication and diversity and strength. It implies no encouragement to error, but rather a certainty that the inconsistencies and contradictions of error shall all be brought to light, and that error itself shall be overthrown by the progress of truth.

I mention these diversities, to say that no soul can sound the whole diapason, and play on all the chords of God's truth and Christian experiences. We need the fellowship of congenial minds, in order to comprehend the wonders of faith

and the fulness of grace. We need to speak often one to another, in order that we may know what God is doing for the whole family of the saints. We need to read many histories and many biographies, in order to comprehend the amplitude of religion's gifts and religion's comforts. We need to be familiar with the Old Testament as well as the New, that we may discern the progress of the Divine dispensation, and of the whole revelation and administration of God.

The conversation of Christians, if thoughtful, tender, and wise, has an almost irresistible hold upon the conscience. The Christian speaks out of the heart, and heart-experiences have always a wonderful impressiveness. I notice that our Methodist brethren, in their annual meetings, close with an assembly for the recital of experiences; and this meeting, in which sometimes one hundred and fifty persons speak within the space of two hours, carries the religious interest and power up to the highest pitch of intensity. It is the fusing of all hearts together; it is the stimulation of every mind by the varied thoughts of other minds; it is the binding of a thousand evidences into one linked and riveted chain; it is the prostration of many souls in penitence before the Cross, and the blending of many voices in one united supplication before the throne. Its practical power, using the daily events of human life and the outbursting emotions of the sanctified heart, is very great. President Edwards, in his remarks on the great Northampton and Whitefieldian revival, says: "Nothing seemed to produce greater effects on the minds of my congregation than recitals of the prevalence of religion in other places." There is a wonderful power which histories, and biographies, and personal experiences have over the mind. We never tire of the skilfully wrought poem or romance, if it be a vivid and natural sketch of human affections, of desire and aversion, of hope and fear, of love and indignation, of joy and sorrow, of mighty impulses, great thoughts, noble aims, and earnest resolves. "The words of the wise," says Solomon, "are as nails and goads, fastened by the master of assemblies." Probably no individual in this assembly can-

not bear testimony, from his own recollection, of some religious conversation with father, or mother, or teacher, with dear companion or Christian friend, where the words spoken were indeed as nails, well clinched,—they abide in memory, and will till life shall end. Their impression is deep, indelible, sacred; hallowed by death, permanent as time, to endure forever. Often, how often, have we sat together in heavenly places, communing with the saints. Often, how often, has Christ Himself entered within the doosr, and talked with us, as He did with His disciples in the Emmaus journey, till our hearts have burned within us. We have seen Him, not visibly, but with the eye of faith; we have heard Him, not audibly, but with the ear of prayer.

It is when the Spirit of God is poured out, and Christians are awakened, and conversions are multiplied, that these meetings and conversations have an inimitable beauty and an inexpressible worth; then the heart is enlarged, the intellect is quickened, the tongue is loosed; then deepest interest is felt, and intensest longings are cherished for the spiritual welfare of neighbors and friends; then all Gospel doctrines, all religious facts, all events of the day, bearing on the question of revivals, become of indescribable significance. Then we prove the power of prayer; then we comprehend the unseen agency of the Holy Ghost; then we see how feeble words of ordinary religious conversation are omnipotent, and become like the hammer that breaks the rock, like the fire that consumes the dross, like the cleaving sword that divides asunder. We see how insignificant instrumentalities become mighty, through God, to the awakening, conviction, and conversion of men, to the pulling down of the strongholds of errors, to the building up of the enduring fortifications of truth.

O for the power of this believing, loving, alluring speech in our Christian assemblies and in our ordinary daily fellowship! Christians, let your mouth be opened to speak for Christ. Who can impress as you can, the love of Jesus, if you have felt it in your heart? Who can tell of the burden of sin, as you can, if you have groaned, and prayed, and

sighed, and wept, and fainted under it? Who can reprove, exhort, entreat as you can, with gentleness and persuasive-ness, because you have known how much you have to be forgiven, how multiplied your spiritual foes, how terrible your spiritual conflicts? Who can picture Heaven as you can picture it, if you have looked within the gates? Who can delineate the darkness of despair and the agonies of woe as you can delineate them, if you have wrestled with Satan and stood on the brink of Hell? Who or what can give assurance, like the actual Christian life, and the living, speaking tongue, of the power of faith, of the beauty of holiness, of the victories of prayer? O my friends, go forth, and in Christ's stead, moved by the argument of the Cross, restrained by the history of Christian experiences, relying upon the co-operating and supernatural power of the Holy Ghost, speak to your dying fellow-men of their instant duty and privilege! Then shall you keep yourselves in the love of God.

3. In order to keep yourselves in the love of God, *you must cultivate with assiduous watchfulness a holy life.* Religion's reality and most impressive recommendation are seen in a holy life. We are moved by example more than we are by argument. This is the whole history of the world. All lessons of human life deeply impress the heart. This is the power of society, of the drama, of biography; it is the power which moves the crowd on the day of festivals; it is the power which sways the vast congregation, stirred by one impulse under the passion of a revolution, or under the pathos of a startling providence of God; it is the power which arouses an invincible sentiment in the soul, and nerves the arm with almost superhuman strength, as the multitude rush to a conflagration to save a human life, or rush into battle to rescue an imperiled nation. A holy life is the leverage power by which God will pry the world out of its deep foundations, if this mighty, imponderable mass of unbelief, impenitence, and sin is ever overturned. It is more than sermons, more than books, more than philosophic argument, more than any eloquence of words. It is so because it addresses and rouses

all the faculties, affections, impulses of man; it stops not short with intellect; it is not satisfied with moving the sensibilities of the heart; it traverses the whole nature. Hope and fear, love and hatred, intellect and conscience, memory and imagination,—it lays a hand of mighty force upon them all. Theological treatises and elaborate sermons find their sustaining evidences and their thrilling illustrations in human life. It would be far easier for the chemist, without any laboratory or any apparatus or any experiments, to work out his theories, far easier for the astronomer, without any telescope, and I had almost said without any stars, to prove his science, than for the theologian or the preacher, to impress the minds of men without a holy church.

It is idle and useless for a man to *talk* religion to us, and then *live* irreligion. He is rowing one way, and looking another; or, rather, he rows first with his right hand on one side of the boat, and then with his left hand on the other. He whirls the boat around, and makes no progress; and, in the mean time, he is looking every way. He has no fixed aim, he has no abiding principle, he has no consistency of doctrine, and no harmony of life. If professors of religion do not live a holy life, their precepts, exhortations, sermons, so far as the influence of those professors extends, are powerless. Ericsson may publish a beautiful system of mechanical forces, and put forth his theory of the iron-clads; but if the Monitor goes into the fight with another ship, and is crushed like an egg-shell, who believes his theory? If it comes out of the battle victorious, as it did in the conflict with the Merrimack, who doubts his theory? Morse and Cyrus Field may discourse, no matter how eloquently, of the power of electricity, and of the transmission of thought from one continent to another; but the proof is in the successful working of the telegraphic wire and of the Atlantic cable. All arguments for religion are vain, that is, they are without influence over human minds, till you have a holy church. I admit, you will admit, that the doctrines of the Bible are high, sublime, divine, perfect. Rousseau admits, Gibbon admits, that the life and death of Christ were

beautiful, unparalleled, worthy of all admiration. It is the conviction and the acknowledgment of all the literary world, that the system of Gospel morals has no equal, nor precedent, neither in any system of philosophy, nor in any code of law, that the world has produced. Why, then, is there so much of doubt, of infidelity, of contemptuous indifference and practical rejection of the doctrines of Jesus? I find manifold reasons. Some, in the alienation of the heart from truth and from God; some, in the preoccupation of the mind, by pleasures and by vanities; some, in the amazing power of appetite and passion and the temptations of sense; others, in the fascinations of error, surrounded and set off, as it is, with the adornments of art, and bewilderments of genius, imagination, refinement, elegance. But after all, it is not to be denied that one great influence of error, in its power over human souls, is in the deficiencies of the church. The galvanic battery will not send the message; the Ericsson monitor will not fight the battle; the Fulton machinery will not obey the propulsion of steam. Ah, brethren, let us lead a holy life, and then will the world be satisfied of the divinity of Christ's religion.

4. Still again, to maintain supreme love to God, you *must be constant in prayer for the Holy Ghost*. We are in danger of losing sight of our dependence upon the Holy Ghost. In the great results of spiritual growth, which we behold, our eye is very likely to be fixed upon the secondary cause, not upon the grand, original, efficient cause. God's work is out of sight, by hidden influences, by spiritual agencies. He works by that wonderful sovereignty and that omnipotent fiat, which, though more potent than the whirlwind, or the earthquake, or the fire, is nevertheless silent, invisible, inscrutable. We are unconscious of the processes by which God's grace works within us. When God pardons our sin, we are not brought before a judicial assembly, for public trial and public acquittal. It is an act between the conscience and its Saviour, in the silent communion of the closet, in the secret recesses of the will. When God regenerates the heart, He brings no public, ostentatious, portentous forces into exercise;

it is a still, small voice; it is a spiritual, invisible creation. In this respect, God's workings are like those beneficent processes which go on in the material world. The energy which covers the entire earth with beauty and riches, does not come with the roar of winds, and the rumbling of earthquakes, and the reverberation of thunders; it comes, calm and quiet as the morning sunlight, gentle and noiseless as the nightly dew. Thus, the grass grows upon the hillside; thus, the corn ripens in the meadows; thus, the blossoms unfold upon the trees. Thus, too, the soul, long impenitent, but now convicted of sin and broken-hearted before the Cross, passes from the unregenerate to the regenerate state, and then, by progressive steps of sanctification, goes onward, without making display or attracting attention, from knowledge to knowledge, from victory to victory, from imperfect services here to the glory and the joy of heaven.

Now, as God's work is thus unseen, we are very likely to allow it to pass unacknowledged. We are very likely to cherish vanity and pride, as if we ourselves were the authors of the work which God has accomplished; as if we had made atonement for our own offences, and regenerated our own hearts, and wrought out our own sanctification. Our own action is patent before the eye. We study hour after hour, and meditate year after year, upon the doctrines of the Gospel and the duties of the Christian. We spend one day in seven in the exercises of public worship. Our wrestlings with temptation, and our conflicts with Satan, are at a terrible expense of weariness, despondency, fear, and anguish. Our work is with the friction and the clatter of machinery, with the jostling and the wrenching and the frequent failure of inadequate forces. God's work is with the ever-progressive and never-failing movement of omniscience, that acts without confusion; of omnipotence, to which there can be no effectual resistance. Let me entreat you to be on your guard against self-trust and self-sufficiency. God is jealous of His prerogatives. He will not divide His honor with another. If we attempt to put our own instrumentalities in the place of God,

to imagine that we can convert souls by arrangements and ingenuities and engineering of our own, — that we, by our irresistible arguments, and by our notable devices, can lead the souls of men, as leviathan is led by a hook, — we miscalculate our own power. We arrogate to ourselves Divine efficiency. We thrust our hands offensively upon the ark of God, to stay it up, and we shall be smitten with spiritual blindness in our own souls, and with spiritual barrenness in the church of which we are members.

We are dependent upon the power of God for growth in grace, and for the efficiency of our Christian labors. We are conscious of mortal weakness. We have struggled often, and struggled earnestly, and struggled in vain, for self-regeneration. The Holy Spirit comes to us in our blindness and our guilt, in our helplessness and our anguish, to take away the pollution of sin, to break the tyranny, to change the ruling purposes of the mind, to emancipate the soul. The Holy Spirit brings to us a free, inestimable, Divine gift. Without money and without price, asking for no preparation on our part, — for the only preparation is a willingness to be saved, — the Holy Spirit comes and gives the infinite bounties of God to the waiting soul. Let the reckless, misguided, disappointed prodigal have a consciousness of starvation, and a loathing of the husks on which he has been feeding; let his anxious thoughts go back to his father's house and his father's love and his father's multiplied provisions for the happiness of the erring child; let him only be disposed to say, "In my father's house is bread enough and to spare; I will arise and go my Father"; that moment the Holy Spirit, that Messenger of grace, stands by his side, anoints his eyes with eye-salve, strengthens his feet with conquering energy, clothes his deformity with robes of beauty, feasts his soul with heavenly banquetings, clasps him in the strong embraces of parental affection, purges away from his soul, as by magic enchantment, all those anterior and degrading and miserable impulses of rebellion, takes him, ere he is aware, in the chariot of Amminadib, into the very midst of the songs and rejoicings

and welcomings of the loved ones at home. This is the reviving breath that waked the slumberers in the valley of vision; this is the burning fire that sat on apostolic tongues, on the day of Pentecost; this is the new creation, more wonderful than the bursting forth of suns and stars, out of "Chaos and old Night," into their wide, undeviating, luminous orbits; this is the renewing, wrought by the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us understand the grandeur of the Divine power, in working upon the mind and the heart of man in the regeneration; let us pray for the Holy Ghost,—for by this gift our hearts shall be cleansed from sin, our idolatrous affections and our vain thoughts shall be called back from their wanderings, and our aims shall be immeasurably exalted; let us pray for the Holy Ghost,—then shall our vacillating purposes, long balancing between earth and heaven, between self and Christ, at last be fixed, pointing to Christ as the needle to the pole; then shall our ignorance and misapprehensions be removed, for God shall couch the blind eye; then shall our weakness be made strong, for God shall hold us up; then shall we go forward with rapid growth, exemplifying the right, recommending religion, laboring for souls, and laboring not in vain.

Let us keep ourselves in the love of God; let us resist the world; let our conversation be full of Christ; let our life be blameless and consecrated; let us pray without ceasing, for the Holy Ghost. Then shall we attain spiritual enjoyment and spiritual strength. "Building yourselves up," says the apostle, "on your most holy faith, keep yourselves in the love of God." The language is significant of a costly, symmetrical, enduring temple. The Church of Christ, faithful and true, is a city set on a hill, and quite as easy would it be for you to stand on some height overlooking this city, and look abroad upon the costly mills and dwellings and churches; the buildings dedicated to mechanism and trade; upon the rolling rivers here conjoining; upon the gardens of shrubbery, and the lines of embowering trees, and the beautiful dwellings that nestle beneath; upon the edifices for school and church

culture, pledges of a high intellectual and moral attainment; upon this perpetual whirl of business; this never-ceasing toil; this ever-expanding enterprise; this ever-accumulating thrift,—and be ignorant of the signs of industry and of the privileges and blessings which surround New England life, as to view the Church of Christ, marking well the glory of her doctrines; the order of her worship; the elevation of her character; the splendor of her benevolence; the extent of her influence,—and not see that this is the product, the most wonderful product ever seen on earth, of a Divine and matchless power.

PEACE LIKE A RIVER.

[This sermon was first preached at John-street Church, Lowell, January 22, 1871, and four weeks afterwards at a United Service of the Congregational churches. It was subsequently preached to the Presbyterians worshipping in Jackson Hall, Lowell; in the Free-will Baptist Church, Lowell; at Malden, Sudbury, Tewksbury, Chelsea, Winchendon, Mass., and at East Burke, Vt. It is especially marked by that quality of unction which his associate pastor affirms to have been his peculiar characteristic. (See Sketch, page 225.) It was evidently written at white heat and with a full soul. It would be hard to find a sermon in which the peculiarities of Dr. Foster's style are more distinct.]

Is. 48 : 18. — “*O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments ; then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.*”

THE text furnishes to us this truth, — obedience to the commandments of God is a source of mental tranquillity, and that tranquillity, small at first as the exhalations of the air, or the drops of the cloud, shall become at length like the deep-rolling river and the illimitable sea.

I. *Two characteristics of the peace of God* are indicated by the river and the sea.

1. *Its copious abundance.* “Then had thy peace been as a river.” It is not a stagnant pool, but an ever-flowing stream, from an exhaustless fountain. It is a river, — broad, deep, uniform, — with this only change, it widens in extent, and deepens in volume, in its onward course.

The text conveys the idea of constancy and exhaustlessness. “Peace like a river.” The river does not dry up in summer droughts. It is not dependent on a shower. The spring freshet may pass away. The snows, melting from the moun-

tains and creating a torrent, will soon disappear. The surcharged cloud of tropical climates may send down its sudden and mighty deluge, yet it is as transient as mighty. But the river rolls on. Its fountains are deep in the hills, and are exhaustless. It rolls on, in sunshine and storm, in summer and winter, in night and day, in lowland meadows among flowers, in the hill country between high bluffs,—uniform, urgent, ceaseless, beautiful, and useful, an emblem of the Christian's peace.

This peace has inexhaustible abundance, because it flows from an inexhaustible fountain. God cannot change; He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever,—in love, holiness, wisdom, power, sovereignty, goodness, mercy; He is immutable. His laws cannot change: they are the stability of His throne; they are the guarantee of His happiness. The heavens may be rolled together as a scroll; the pillars of the earth may tremble; all the forces and forms of matter may be changed; but the laws of holiness and justice and mercy cannot be changed. Moral rules cannot be abrogated. Why, then, should the covenant of love, into which God enters with His children, change? Why should His omnipotent guardianship, and the sanctifying grace which He offers, change? They will not. Why should our hopes and joys change? They will not, if we lean upon Him, and commune with Him, and are true to duty.

“Peace like a river.” This does not imply that the Christian's course is free from conflicts and difficulties and doubts, but only that doubts shall be subdued, and difficulties shall be overcome, and harassments shall finally cease. The river may have its windings, but every one knows whither it is tending. The Merrimack River does not hold a straight course: its bearings through the State of New Hampshire are south; after passing Chelmsford, it turns east; after passing Pawtucket Falls, it turns north; half a mile from the falls, it meets a range of hills. But Belvidere and Centralville Heights, cannot stop it; an eastern bend and a northern bend cannot deflect it from its chosen bearings; it goes to the sea. It seems

very strange that we should be surrounded by so much of doubt. But we believe that God appoints the trial as a test of faith, as a development of patience, energy, perseverance, and fidelity. A period of revivals usually comes after a period of infidelity. The river straightens its course after windings and breaks through the hills. Doubt and care, skepticism and scorn, are rebuked by the Spirit of God; new force is given to the doctrines of the Gospel; the Church puts on her beautiful garments of holiness and praise; men are raised up by God who are endowed with holy fervor and invincible argument.

Thus it was when Luther battled with the errors of Romanism; thus, when Whitefield and Wesley, by the weapons of the Gospel, demolished the formalism of the English Church; thus, when President Dwight preached his sermons on theology, in Yale College, and rolled back the whole tide of unbelief which was rushing in upon our seminaries of learning; thus, when Lyman Beecher laid bare the fallacies of atheism, and checked the course of scoffing in Easthampton; thus, when Edward Dorr Griffin and Francis Wayland lifted up the standard of Christ in Boston.

It seems very strange that these periodic tides of religious doubt, corresponding usually with scientific exploration and material improvement, should find any place in human opinions. We do not tolerate doubt in politics. Our opinions here are well defined, clearly cut, and strongly expressed. A man is either a Republican or a Democrat; if he is undecided, he gets blows from both sides. As we make progress in science, scientific doctrines are more definitely and decisively laid down. He who disputes the cardinal principles of chemistry or astronomy, is dismissed into the outer limbo of eccentric, unbalanced, foolish speculators. There is more of skepticism in religion because its doctrines are deep and high, and spiritual and distant. They pertain to the inner soul, to the will of God, to the destinies of eternity. There is more of doubt and unbelief in religion, because its duties run in direct opposition to impulses of the soul and fashions of the world, which are widely prevalent. They require the overthrow of appetites and passions, of plottings and ambi-

tions, of customs and maxims which have wide and perilous sway. Of course, if any of the sophistries of error, or the powers of the world, can beat down this religion of self-denial, they will do it. Let the Christian maintain a firm and earnest mind. Let him live near to Christ, in faith and prayer, studying thoughtfully the Bible, comparing the facts of history with the doctrines of Scripture, longing for a higher style of piety, laboring intensely for souls. Then shall infidelities and the opposition of scoffing men have no more influence over him than the rocks that lie in the river's bed, or the hills that block the river's course, can hinder its progress to the sea.

"Then had thy peace been as a river." Our age is remarkable for its awakened intelligence, for earnest popular debate, for increased activity. The river gathers volume as it nears the sea. Every succeeding generation of Christians has a larger responsibility than the one that went before. Let me remind young Christians, that in these times they are called upon to be deeply thoughtful, to be wide awake, to be wholly consecrated. Holding on to the faith of the fathers and the mothers, who taught your childhood, and guided your youth, and have prayed for you all the way, you are expected to develop a more intense and efficient energy, as the battlings of infidelity, and the openings of Providence, and the exigences of the times demand. There is a river of New Hampshire which runs from two head branches. It is formed of the Pemigewasset and the Winnipiseogee Rivers, the one pouring down rapidly from the mountains, the other running in a tranquil stream from the lakes. So have I seen a young man, drawing his physical life, and his mental and moral characteristics, from a father of restless and unconquerable energy, and a mother of gentleness and love, also unconquerable, combining the force and the gentleness into one deep current, adding a culture which neither of the parent-streams possessed, and then pouring on to the sea, in double volume, like the Merrimack itself, with luxuriant harvests, and peaceful villages, and opulent cities springing up through its influence and by its side. Render, therefore, thanks to God for the pure fountain from which your being flows. Cherish devout gratitude for

the cultivation of the Divine husbandry, through schools and churches, through thoughtful societies, and republican institutions, and just laws, by which your soul and life have been exalted. And then, with faith that changes not, and activity that wearies not, let your influence, often silent and unconscious, yet always immeasurable, spread far and wide, carrying to the borders of the land, and the ends of the earth, its spiritual and imperishable blessings.

“Peace like a river!” I do not say there is perfect uniformity of experience in the Christian’s life. God has appointed diversity and novelty and ever-fresh delight in all things, and monotony nowhere. Now, the river rolls between mountains and meanders in plains; now it rushes in cascades, and now it smoothly glides on gentlest downward grades; now it passes by forests, and again by cultivated fields; now by deserts, and anon by blooming gardens; now by quiet farm-houses, and in a little time by populous cities; still, and ever, the river, in all essential features, is the same. Something of this change in outward circumstances and chance influences, takes place in the Christian’s life. There is action and reaction in the enthusiasm of the soul and the energy of labor; there is rise and fall of thought and of strength; there are eddyings and refluxes and tides in the stream; but the river is the same, and it ever rolls on. The peace is divine; the strength is constant; the victories are sure. Not only are the joy and strength constant; they increase as the river rolls to the sea. Faith is perfected; knowledge is enlarged; the holy purpose is confirmed; the mind reaches upward with more intense spiritual desire; the power of sin is broken, and the world is trampled under foot. Christ dwells in the heart, and the heart is stayed upon God.

“Rivers to the ocean run,
Nor stay in all their course;
Fire ascending seeks the sun;
Both speed them to their source;
So the soul that’s born of God,
Upward tends to His abode,
To rest in His embrace.”

How beautifully and wonderfully have we seen this rule exemplified in cases which have come under our own observation, in instances of the modern church. We need not go back to prophets like David and Isaiah, whose "sweetest songs were the last they sung." We need not go back to Paul, the apostle, whose strength and hope and joy and successes rolled on in an ever-deepening current, till he could say at the last, "I have fought the fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." We need go back no farther than Whitefield, who preached in the morning at Exeter, and died the following night in Newburyport, and who left it as one of his last testimonies, "I am not weary of my work, but weary *in it*." "I trust in the grace of my Redeemer." "I am going to the bosom of my God." We need go back no farther than Albert Barnes, who lately died in Philadelphia, without a moment's premonition; preaching Christ's love up to the last Sabbath of his life; publishing, during the last three weeks of his life, three articles, most touching, most beautiful, most instructive, on Old Age; quickening believers to a higher spirituality; preparing his own soul, with new culture of faith and love, for the angel's flight. Is not such a river of peace, full-swollen to its banks, and rolling on in ever-augmenting tides to the sea? He who has this peace is happy. Happy this hour in memory and prayer; happy to-morrow in love and labor; happy next week or next year, for God his Father does not change; happy in all the vicissitudes of life, for the principles on which he builds his hopes are enduring; happy in death; happy forever!

2. The second characteristic of Christian peace, brought to view in the text, is *fathomless mystery*. This peace is not only exhaustless as the river; it is like the deep, illimitable sea. "Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." The peace of God is substantial and enduring. It does not spring from any of the dreams of a visionary mind; it is built on a present and actual good. It is the pardon of sin; it is the regeneration of the heart; it is the elevation of thought; it is the sanctification of the life; it

is comfort in sorrow; it is strength and success in the fulfilment of duty; it is victory and spiritual growth in the hour of temptation; it is communion with God; it is hope of heaven! And are not these attainments an actual, present, substantial good? And yet, after all these rich experiences of the Christian heart, and after all the emphasis and power of human language, the peace of God is incomprehensible and mysterious. Height, depth, length, breadth, it passeth knowledge; like the ocean, it is fathomless; like space, it is infinite; like existence, it is eternal!

“Then had thy righteousness been as the waves of the sea.” There is nothing below the sun which is so startling a representative of the eternity and of the measureless riches of God’s power and grace, as the ocean. We can calculate with some degree of accuracy the products of the fields, and the wealth of the mines, and the returns of human industry; but you cannot measure the exhalations of the sea, nor the fertility which it diffuses, nor the riches which it contains. You can compute eclipses; you can estimate the times and the orbit and the rapidity of the planets; you can mark out roads and build structures upon the solid earth; but you can trace no paths upon the sea; you cannot with certainty prophesy the force of to-morrow’s tide upon any part of the Atlantic coast; you cannot tell what billows will heave your ship, or winds will push your sails, or currents will rule your vessel’s course, on any day of the year, a hundred miles from land. Go out half a league from the shore, on any part of the coast, or sail fifty miles in any direction over the Atlantic or Pacific, and you know not what riches lie hidden beneath the prow of your boat, where freighted ships have gone down. Silver and gold may be there; furs of the North, and cottons of the South, and woollens of the temperate zone may be there; all precious grains and spices, mahogany wood and sandal wood, shining gems and costly ornaments, manufactures and agricultural products, books of genius, letters of love, works of art, memorials of man’s most skilled intelligence, may be there. They have suffered a sea change, but they lie buried there.

And then in addition to all the riches of the broad, green earth, which may be hidden there, are treasures of another kind, which mortal eye hath not seen, and mortal hand may not touch. Even so, the ocean is but a representation of the peace which God gives to the believing soul, of the righteousness in which He clothes His elect and sanctified children. You may draw upon the last resources of what is beautiful and valuable in science and friendship and history and human life; you may go to the circles of highest culture and accomplishment; you may enter the home of completest harmony and love; you may visit schools where all the appliances of education are found; you may go to the palaces of the nobility, or the houses of elegance, where wealth, refinement, art, luxury dwell; you may go to the Grecian intellect, or the Roman power, or the British independence, or the French courtesy, or the Italian art, or the German philosophy, or the American enterprise; you may call up hallowed memories and brilliant anticipations; you may ransack and rifle the centuries, the kingdoms, and the nations, to find something beautiful and blessed. We will match you with more blessed attainments and with higher gifts, in the Christian's soul and the Christian's life. As the sea has all the treasures which this earth has ever possessed, and its own proper treasures besides, so the Christian has the largest wealth of mind and heart and life which this world can give, and then heaven beyond. As the sailor, passing out a hundred miles to sea, may be urged forward towards his desired haven by favoring winds and tides, more auspicious and powerful than any which former voyages record; so, we doubt not, we are coming to a millennial period, when there will be an energy of Divine peace, and a power of Christian righteousness, which will lift the believing soul and the whole Church of Christ to a higher altitude of piety, and set them forward on more easy, rapid, and victorious waves of advancement than any experience of the past. Let us not measure our Christian expectations by the immobility of the land, but by the boundless, restless, mighty waves of the sea. Let us remember that Christian peace is that which Christ

gives, that Christian righteousness is that which Christ provides, and then you have expressed the whole,—it is illimitable as the sea; it is fathomless as the deep; it is rich as the diversified treasures of earth; it is mysterious as eternity!

And why should we repine at the mystery? Why should we doubt the value of the gift because we know not all its secrets? Why should we question the goodness of God, or the glory of His attributes, because He keeps back knowledge which is above our finite reach, but within His infinite competence? No one denies that the blood courses through arteries and veins, from the centre to the extremities, ceaselessly, unconsciously, mysteriously. No one denies that the lungs expand and collapse, inhale and throw out the air, draw from it oxygen and health; the fact is obvious; the force that does this work we call life, but the nature of that force is unknown; yet no one stumbles on account of the mystery. No one denies the connection between brain and nerves, and the power of the mind which governs the muscles of the arm; no one disputes the fact; no one explains it; and no one is made a scientific infidel by the mystery. But when we are told that the peace of God is incomprehensible,—that while we know something, yea, very much, of its certainty, beauty, grandeur, worth, yet it is a mystery, because the laws and results of it are not fully known; a mystery, because the natural mind discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; a mystery, because earth cannot comprehend heaven, any more than the hollow of the hand can hold the ocean. Then the caviling mind cries out, “Your religion is all a dream; you acknowledge it is a mystery; we pronounce it fanaticism and folly.” Ah, my friends, if we were as great infidels in practical life, as we are in religion, many of us would neither eat, nor drink, nor breathe, nor sleep; we should not allow our children to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep, till they had been to college and learned the profound philosophy of the largest science. And then, having attained the largest science, we should speedily die of starvation, or suffocation, or dungeon-darkness, or zero-cold; because, not having the full knowledge of the laws of light and heat

and air and the assimilation of food, we would not receive any blessing which was attended by a mystery.

No, my hearers, I see no stumbling-blocks in the mysteries of religion, those benign and blessed truths of revelation, which are unfolding themselves more and more before the reason, leading the thoughts of man always up to God. I see no defect nor flaw attaching itself to the peace of God; because it is deeper than any sounding-line which we can drop into the sea; wider than the sailing-course of any vessel of discovery which we can send out, searching after boundaries. Shall we reject the peace of God because we cannot explain all its laws and processes? I think we ought to judge as the Sultan of Turkey judged, when the mysteries of the galvanic battery and of Morse's telegraph were put before his mind. When Dr. Hamlin and Professor Smith showed him how the electric current must pass around in a certain, completed circle in order to magnetize the iron, he was at first greatly incredulous. Repeatedly and vainly he attempted to pass the current of electricity in a different way. With an eager curiosity, he asked them, "Gentlemen, what is the reason? What is the reason?" They told him it was an ultimate fact; its cause known only to God; man could give no reason. He lifted both his hands in adoration, crying, "God only is great!" Why are we more skeptical than that Mohammedan student? He did not deny the value of the electric telegraph because there was a wonder in it, nor refuse its message because he did not know how the message was transmitted. His thoughts and reverence were lifted up the more to God, because there was a mystery. Let us not reject the grace of Christ because it comes to us in an unexpected way.

II. I turn to inquire, *How is this peace to be obtained?* The answer is in the text, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments!"

1. One of God's commandments is, *that we exercise faith.* "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." Faith is a personal appropriation of the merits and the blood of Christ. Of course, if the soul is crushed under the load

of sin, and slain by the law, and fainting under a sense of guilt and helplessness, it will cling to the outstretched hand of Christ, and will adore His infinite mercy; it will discover in Christ a remedy by which depravity may be healed, and sin may be conquered, and condemnation may be removed, and feebleness and doubt and dread overcome, and by which the whole pathway of life shall be attended by floods of peace. Christ is the Captain of our salvation; made perfect through sympathy and through sufferings. He is the blessed Martyr of humanity; He is the unerring Teacher of truth; He is the conquering Prince of peace; He is our expiatory Atonement; He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. O that we might receive Him as our Prophet, who opens to us the heavenly doctrine; as our Priest, accepting His vicarious sacrifice; as our Judge, calmly awaiting the verdict of the last day; as our King, submitting the soul to His sovereignty! He is the Ocean of love; O that we might sail on that expanse forever! He is the Author of peace; O that we might come to that Fountain, and launch upon that River, that rolls, ever-deepening, to eternity's broad sea!

2. A second of God's commandments is, *that we cherish a sense of individual responsibility*. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." For every person living, God has a special work to do, which no one can do for him, and which he cannot neglect without guilt. He must educate himself for his own particular profession and place; and without his own free-will, his persevering toil, his concentration of mind, upon a definite end, he cannot be fit for that place. A young man may be the son of a college professor, and may be surrounded by the atmosphere of learning all his days; he never will be a scholar without his own individual choices. No man is born a jurist, or a divine, or a manufacturer, or an engineer. A long process of culture, guided by the individual's own determination, must lead him up to the position, and to the qualifications for it. No child is born a Christian. Neither child nor adult is carried to heaven in chariots of ease. There are here abundant opportunity and imperative demand

for free-will. After all that we say, or can say, about the absolute necessity of Christ's atonement, and the divine efficiency of the Holy Ghost, no person ever became a Christian who did not wish to be a Christian, and who did not study and watch and strive and toil and pray to be a Christian. To sit down in passive indolence, and expect to go to heaven, is about as wise as to go on board a frail, open boat, without compass or chart or sail or oar or food, launch it in a storm, sit down contentedly on the thwarts, and expect to go to England. It is a great and critical work to be a Christian. It requires more harmony of the faculties, more sagacity of insight, more self-control and fixed determination at the helm, more self-renouncing approaches to Christ, more vigilant, anxious care, than any other mortal responsibility. It is a great and difficult work which the Christian has to accomplish for a perishing world around him; and as well might you say that the lawyer, pleading in a capital cause, had no occasion to hold carefully the balances of equity; that a surgeon, cutting within a hundredth part of an inch to some vital artery, had no occasion to hold carefully the knife; that the mother, watching over her babe, in the crisis of fever, had no occasion to be vigilant through the long night; as to say that the Christian, watching for souls, needs no discrimination nor spiritual culture for that solemn business. Of all men, he has most occasion to pray to God ceaselessly, Give me grace to love, give me wisdom to plan, give me ability to execute.

Finally: Let me say, God's commandment is, *that we cherish a decisive piety*. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." There is no neutrality nor half-way service allowed in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord. If we are Christians, we have experienced the regeneration; we have submitted the will to Christ; we have made a whole-hearted consecration. The world does not need, just at present, any half-way Christians. It may be that in the millennial period, when there are no more sinners to be converted; no more falsehoods to be resisted; no more organized national evils, imbedded in the very constitution of society, to be extirpated,—it may be that

then the half-way Christian will get along somewhat comfortably. His sluggish fulfilment of duty will not betray unhappy souls; his influence of eminent consecration will not be needed. Though even then we cannot see how he will be quite safe, or how he will be saved, except as by fire. For faith in Christ will be needed then; and watchfulness and prayer will be indispensable; and self-denial and toil will be the only proof of love; and remains of apathy, unbelief, and sin will tempt, harass, torment that unfaithful soul. But now, when we have mountains of difficulty to overcome, and oceans of sorrow and trial to wade through, and dark clouds of infidelity hanging over the land, we see not how any hesitating and indecisive Christian can cherish any hope for himself.

There is no Christian who has not, within the sphere of his personal and special influence, one or more individuals—it may be two or five or ten or twenty—who are swayed more largely by his example and opinions, than by those of any other person living. This Christian, to whom these souls are committed for instruction, guidance, and persuasion, is a teacher in a school; or is surrounded by a circle of brothers and sisters; or is a member of some organized club and intimate fellowship; or is a clerk in a circle of cheerful youth; or is a valued associate in a large company of kindred; and if he is faithful to his covenant-vows, his light will shine, beautiful and far,—like a star in the dark night, like a sun rising to its meridian. Only let him maintain a decisive faith, a symmetrical, intelligent, thoughtful, well-established piety.

This decision of mind will lead you to Christian perseverance. Difficulties stand in the way of all duties, and he who expects to float down-stream, instead of rowing up the current, does not comprehend the first principles of salvation. I have read of an apostle who could say, “I know whom I have believed; I have fought the fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth the crown.” But it was Paul, the aged. He was near the crown; the battle lay behind him; the thunderings of the conflict, the shouts of the warriors, the moans of the wounded, the wail over the dead, the jubilee of the victors,

were things of the past. So have I seen other gray-haired saints, venerable and beloved, worthy of all reverence and esteem, stand up upon the border and testify for Jesus. They had joy in God, they had joy in the sanctuary, they had joy in the communion of the church, they had joy in the mercy of Christ, they had joy in the fulfilment of duty. Conflict and doubt and fear and distress were things of the past,— shadows and memories, not realities. Their peace was as a river; their righteousness as the waves of the sea. We need this perseverance; we need a firm, courageous, persistent mind; not fickle and hesitating, not vacillating and doubtful, but fortified by the truth of God, established by the experiences of the inward soul, led on from strength to strength, through the struggles and the changes of this mortal life, kept through faith, unto salvation, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

THE BIBLE AS AN EDUCATING POWER.

A SERMON TO YOUNG MEN.

[The accompanying sermon was preached in the John-street Church in June, 1866; also in February, 1870; in the Worthen-street Methodist church, Lowell; in West Newbury, Easthampton, South Hadley, Chicopee Falls, Westfield, South Church of Springfield, and Longmeadow, Mass., and in Dummerston, Vt. It appears to have been prepared and first preached in West Springfield, Mass., in June, 1862. As it is here given it has been somewhat changed since its first writing. It was originally used in a course of sermons to young men. It is an admirable illustration of that remarkable flow of impassioned thought with which Dr. Foster used sometimes to bear his hearers on, as if swept forward by an overwhelming flood.]

PSALMS 119: 9. — “*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word.*”

I. THE Bible, as an educating power, prepares young men for *the blessings of a competence*. A competence! The word describes one of the fondest dreams of the ardent mind, to which the young man looks forward with eager desire. A pleasant home, a comfortable property, a loving wife, a circle of sympathizing friends, opportunities of travel, still with that centre of the heart's affection and of the life's labors, dearer than all travels, books, newspapers, pictures, delights, flowers in the garden, pleasant objects in the lawn, a beautiful world on which to look when the eye wanders abroad, tranquillizing and elevating joys on which to rest when the weary feet return to their own garden gate. These are the fond and precious dreams of the young man's forecasting mind. I blame him not for cherishing the vision. God grant that his hope may be fulfilled! But let him not forget nor scorn the true means of accomplishing his desire. Let him remember that the Bible is the foundation on which he must build his plans and his

anticipations, or he builds a castle in the air, and his hopes and joys will ere long tumble in terrible ruin.

The Bible, as an educating power, prepares young men for the blessings of a competence. It teaches the great, comprehensive rules of profit and of loss. It does not sacrifice the body for the soul; it does not overlook the interests of time for the sake of eternity. While it points the path of salvation for eternity and for the soul, it points the path of prosperity for the whole of this mortal life. It inculcates industry, frugality, self-denial, and the admirable virtues which adorn the character of the man of business. It inspires the mind with activity and strength, purging away the mists of passion, removing the darkness of prejudice, giving keenness of insight, and patience of application, and profoundness of thought. It enlarges the field of vision, and brings all questions of secular interest into their relation to future and spiritual results. It leads to the exercise of integrity, of that exalted, Christian integrity which counts poverty a far less evil than a stain upon honor, which regards sin as worse than death.

I might select a Bible-taught youth, — a young man who not only reads the Bible, but prayerfully studies it and seeks to obey it, and then I might describe his business character. I might trace him through the paths of labor and accomplishment, of frugal self-denial and sagacious enterprise and indefatigable toil. I might show how the Bible relieves his perplexities, exalts his aims, and invigorates his arm. I think I could convince you that the Bible gives him a nobler plan of action, and power to execute that plan, — that it gives to him a symmetrical, well-balanced, and lovely character, and therefore secures the confidence of his fellow-men; that it hushes the tumultuous passions, thus bringing reason and impulse into sweet accord, and adding new and extraordinary force to the mind because the affections work in harmony with it. I could show how, under the agitations of opinion, and the stress of temptation, and the disappointments and sorrows of life, the mind, guided by faith, preserves its tranquillity and maintains its probity, so that surging billows, which carry other men off

their feet and leave them wrecked on the rocks of disaster, only drive his ark of refuge farther out into the deep blue sea, and farther on towards the haven of endless rest.

Instead of describing the progress of the individual educated by the Bible, rising in the scale of intellectual force, surrounding himself with all the blessings of a competence, let me describe a class. The life of a nation is longer than that of a man, and we can judge of the exaltation of a family through long generations, or of a people through successive centuries, better than of an isolated individual. There are eight hundred millions of heathen souls in the world, and two hundred millions of nominal Christians. The eight hundred million heathen are sunk in barbarism; they are ignorant in mind; they are improvident as to the future; they are indolent, sensual, sordid; they are destitute of comforts. The two hundred million Christians are raised in the scale of civilization, more thoughtful, more diligent, more frugal, more wise, more self-controlled, in all the useful arts farther advanced, in all physical blessings more largely supplied. The pagan mind is stagnant as a dead sea, slimy as a putrid pool, poisonous as a malarious marsh, and all external tokens of unthrift and discomfort correspond. The Christian mind is awake; it inquires after the relations of cause and effect; it investigates sciences; it makes discoveries; it brings in inventions; it makes machinery do the work of human hands and almost the thinking of human brains; it subsidizes Nature's forces and material laws, to the ends of utility; it may increase the number of human wants, but it multiplies a thousand-fold the amount of supplies; it furnishes comforts, privileges, delicacies, elegances, even luxuries, in exuberant abundance. That the Bible is the cause is just as obvious as that the sun is the source of light. The proofs are of the same nature. When the rays of the sun are absent, darkness comes, vegetation languishes, life beats with slow and failing pulses; bring back the beams of the sun, and all this decay and inactivity disappear. Precisely the same method of proof discloses the Bible's power. Its absence is followed invariably by mental and

moral inefficiency, by commercial, agricultural, mechanical torpor. The facts admit of no dispute. Take the two countries where the Bible is the most revered, England and America. What causes the busy and universal hum of industry, the rush of enterprise, the elevation of the masses? What gives public order and general security? What scatters over the whole country cultivated fields, waving with grain, green hill-sides covered with herds and flocks? What sets in motion the mechanical forces of the manufacturing village, and makes it the centre of trade for the entire country around, sending forth its fabrics to distant territories and foreign lands? What builds up the city, with its educated mind, its business talent, its accumulated wealth, its treasure-houses of goods from every clime, its powerful excitements applied to learning and art, its social refinements, its moral power? What makes the city the great heart of the country around, pulsing its mighty flow of thought and principle and power, of education and politics and business, back and forth through all the veins and arteries of the land? What makes the country the inexhaustible feeder of these central forces? You live in your ceiled and painted and carpeted houses, furnished with every necessity of life, decorated with every adornment of taste, when in pleasant homes of thoughtfulness and harmony, in quiet gardens of beauty and fertility, your lives pass away like a dream of the primeval paradise. Nowhere, except in homes based on the same Christian faith as exists in New England, can you find such delights as those which you experience, scattered through a community. Young men, it is unworthy your noble powers sluggishly to take these benefits and never to ask for the cause. It is the dictate of a narrow deduction and of a false philosophy, to ascribe the blessing to any cause but one, and that is the ameliorating, civilizing, exalting influence of the Bible.

Macaulay says of England: —

“The national wealth, during six centuries at least, has been almost uninterruptedly increasing. This progress, having continued during many ages, became at length, about the middle

of the eighteenth century, portentously rapid, and has proceeded during the nineteenth with accelerated velocity. During a hundred years there has been in the island no tumult of sufficient importance to be called an insurrection. The law has never been borne down by popular fury or by regal tyranny. Public credit has been held sacred. Under the benignant influence of peace and liberty, science has flourished, and has been applied to practical purposes on a scale never before known. Could the England of 1685 be, by some magical process, set before our eyes, we should not know one landscape in a hundred, or one building in ten thousand. The inhabitant of a town would not recognize his own street. Everything has been changed but the great features of Nature, and a few massive and durable works of human art. Many thousands of square miles which are now rich corn land and meadow, dotted with villages and pleasant country seats, would appear as marshes or wild fens."

A still more remarkable progress and change have taken place within two hundred years in our own country. Our progress in wealth and thrift, in commerce and trade, in the products of the earth and the structures of the artisan, in mechanical ingenuity and manufacturing skill, has been without a parallel. The growth of England and America is not the result of any original superiority in science, or advantages of climate or of race. Greece and Rome were exalted in learning and genius and art, when our ancestors were barbarians. Italy and Spain have more salubrious skies and more genial airs and a more exuberant soil than Great Britain or these Northern States. France has the Norman blood; Germany has the Saxon energy; and if qualities of race were to lead the world, they have as fair an opportunity as we. Other nations have mountains as sublime, lakes as beautiful, rivers as navigable, plains as fertile, forests as vast, mineral stores as rich, harbors as safe, fisheries as inexhaustible, facilities of travel and navigation as numerous, sites of cities as favorable, laborers as stalwart, governments as energetic as we. Where, then, is the wide distinction? It is in the religious instruction and religious character of the people. It is in the all-pervading and all-controlling influences which the Bible brings to bear upon mind and heart and life; upon schools, society, gov-

ernment; upon the progress of science and the utilitarian results it secures. The progress of England and America in material welfare has corresponded exactly with the progress in biblical knowledge and biblical faith. The advancement or retrogradation in states and provinces, in families and communities, in the energy of individual minds and the prosperity of business men, has corresponded exactly with the progress or retrogression in Bible obedience. The proof is ample and irrefragable, that the Bible, as an educating power, prepares young men for the blessings of a competence.

Shall we gather together, in this Centennial year, from all parts of the land, rich and varied samples of our agricultural products, rare specimens of mechanical inventions and manufacturing arts; shall the country appropriate hundreds of acres of ground for their display, and tens of thousands of dollars; shall we call hither the learned and the celebrated, governors of States, mayors of cities, orators of renown, judges and legislators, to rehearse the history of this material progress; shall newspapers send their skilled reporters from every village and city, in order to publish the story; shall this jubilee of agriculture and art awaken enthusiasm, hope, thanksgiving, joy, the wide land over, as an omen of future comfort and prosperity; and shall we sit down blindly and stupidly ignorant of the *cause* of this abounding opulence, comfort, refinement, blessedness? We trace the steamboat back to Fulton, the telegraph back to Morse, the sewing-machine back to Howe, the lightning-rod back to Franklin, the building of this republic back to Washington and Adams, the victories of our war back to great statesmen and generals; but we strangely and unbelievably fail to see that Christ is the Giver of our material blessings, and that the Bible is the educating power which leads on the whole grand procession.

II. The Bible is adapted, beyond any power of human wisdom, or any device of human ingenuity, *to instruct and exalt the mind*. There is no other book of the world which will bear such repetition of study, such continuity, minuteness, profoundness of investigation. The minister preaches about

it, week after week, Sabbath after Sabbath, once or twice in the week, twice or thrice on the Sabbath, for thirty or forty or fifty years; and his lessons of truth drawn from the Bible, are as fresh and interesting and subduing in his ripe and golden age, as in his vigorous and progressive youth. The Christian reads it morning, noon, and night, for seventy or eighty years; it never wears out; it never tires; it is as dear to his heart in hoary age as in blooming childhood; it has more power to thrill him than any chains of demonstration, or any bursts of eloquence, or any beauties of poetry. The Sabbath-school class studies it together, one hour weekly, for five, ten, twenty years, and it has the highest charms of novelty, and the largest power of pathos, in the end as in the beginning. The theologian ponders upon it through all his life-time, seeking after the deep things of doctrine, and the high things of duty, and the beautiful things of privilege, striving to arrange them in true scientific relations, and to enforce them by impressive persuasions. No other single book of the world ever attracted the mind or rewarded study, as this Book does.

And why? Can we get at the secret of its power? Can we persuade our youth, when there are newspapers on the right hand and on the left; when there are novels in every library, and almost in every parlor; when there are books of science which demand their earnest thought; and books of poetry which kindle their imagination; and books of history which thrill upon the human heart,—can we persuade them to take the Bible as a more alluring book than any other, to occupy more time, and to secure for them a better intellectual culture?

What is the secret of the Bible's power? We can ascertain some of the reasons, and some we must leave for the study of heaven. It is like the power of the ocean, beyond our fathoming-line; like the power of Niagara, beyond our language or thought; like the sublimity of the Alpine mountain, like the beauty of Scotland's friths, partly arising from the very mystery which enshrouds it. The Bible is peculiar in the structure of its language, employing words that are simple, perspicuous,

energetic; casting its thoughts into sentences and paragraphs, the most natural, the most beautiful; adorning the clear and perfect argument with the most appropriate illustrations. There is an inimitable charm in well-selected words, arranged in skilful forms; they are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. In this respect, the Bible is inapproachable. No laws of the rhetorician, no sagacity of the poet, no power of the orator, can equal it. It is given by Him who made the mind, and who adapts His instruments to reach the mind. It is not the work of a novice, nor a bungler, nor a prentice-hand. It is the product of Him who understands the relations of thought to speech, and who uses human speech to accomplish the great objects of His love. It is therefore equally fascinating to the scholar and the child. The wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot easily miss its meaning; the deepest thinker, though skilled in all philosophy, cannot exhaust its inexhaustible richness. Young men, who are at all ambitious of strength in debate, or conversation, or composition, of skill in scientific research, or argumentative power, will choose some model for their imitation. They study the speeches of Webster, or the essays of Story, or the political arguments of Burke, or the philosophy of Coleridge, or the great epic of Milton. This is well. But there is a more wonderful structure of language, there is a higher discipline of mind, there is a nobler pattern of eloquence and power, — you will find them all in the Bible. It is as if the angels were translating the thoughts of God, out of the dialect of heaven, into the vocabulary of earth; and while you read and ponder, it is as if you were caught up with Paul into the third heavens, and saw indescribable glories and heard incommunicable words.

When we penetrate beneath the language, and inquire after the thoughts of the Bible, we find the most remarkable combination of doctrine, precept, and promise, history of grand events, delineation of every-day life, pictures of nature, argument that convinces, poetry that charms, pathos that melts, invitations that allure, and warnings that overwhelm. The doctrine brings before us the invisible, incomprehensible,

eternal God, — no longer a dim abstraction of the schools; no longer a senseless idol of the heathen; no longer a vengeful Nemesis of the past, sitting on His cruel throne and hurling His inexorable darts; but our loving Father, our justifying Saviour, our tender Friend. We see Him in the clouds; we hear Him in the winds; we trace His pathway in the diversities of nature and the dealings of providence; we discover His interposition in the experiences of the life and the choices of the mind, — it is by the aid of the Revelation. The Bible presents the doctrine in perfect simplicity, and then uses, for its illustration and enforcement, history and biography, changes of material and moral law, wonders of the physical creation and of intellectual action. William Wirt was accustomed to say, "If you wish to strengthen your intellectual powers, read Locke on the Understanding." Lord Chatham, before he made a speech in Parliament, almost invariably read a sermon of Dr. Barrow. It was said of John C. Calhoun, that he was perfectly familiar with Edwards on the Will. Locke and Barrow and Edwards are wonderful for their linked logic and irrefragable argument, amounting almost to demonstration. These strong men, Wirt, Chatham, Calhoun, read these authors for the sake of mental discipline. They loved to grasp the mighty cable of argument, and to be lifted up by its invincible power. But, ah! young friends, the doctrines of the Bible are stronger than the arguments of men. The upper end of that supernatural chain is fastened to the eternal throne, and it comes down with its links and its ladder-steps, through all the heavenly glories, bringing down the voices and the riches of the skies, the thoughts and the purity and the bliss of paradise, to be the inheritance of men.

I would recommend to those who seek for discipline of mind, to read the authors I have named. But Locke has his obscurities, and many a scholar gropes darkly in those pages; Barrow has his fallacious reasonings, and some of his conclusions need to be rectified; Edwards has his tendencies to fatalism, — but the Bible, the Bible, is without blemish or defect or flaw. No one who studies it attentively, can fail to

receive new ideas of grandeur of style, and glory of doctrine, and wealth of instruction, and purity of life. His tastes will be refined, for all the inculcations of the Bible are bathed in the purity of heaven; his intellect will be quickened, invigorated, expanded, for he looks upward to the central divine effulgence, the source of all light; he launches out upon the infinite expanse of knowledge, as the eagle with unblenching eye gazes upon the sun, and with unfaltering wing rises upon the air.

In describing the Bible as an educating power, quickening the mind, I might refer to the supernatural element, pervading it in every part, and distinguishing it from every other possible communication made to the mind of man. We inquire with an insatiable curiosity after the anticipations of the future; we search diligently after the memories of the past; we plunge eagerly into speculations about the hidden and the unknown. These three domains of knowledge, the past, the future, and the unknown, are the object of most of our studies and researches. Confine the view to this little narrow present, to the outward, the visible, and the palpable, and man's aspirations after learning would soon die away. We are interested in the tradition and the legend, which carry us back to the olden time. We form a thousand plans, we indulge a thousand dreams, we cherish ten thousand hopes, which have no basis in present reality; their only dwelling-place is the uncertain future. We go sounding our dim and perilous way through the difficulties of science and providence, of civil administration and human life. The scholar, more than other men, lives in the past and in the future. The stupid barbarian, the absorbed worldling, the degraded sensualist, the imbecile idler, is satisfied with the present and the obvious; the cultivated mind, more than all other minds, wanders beyond these boundaries. Now, it is the supernatural element of the Bible which rouses the faculties and feeds the faculties that search after the past, the future, and the hidden. Hence the Bible stimulates the scholarly mind. Show me a mind that loves the Bible, and I will show you a reflecting mind; show me a pro-

foundly meditative mind, and I will show you peculiar and strong affinities between that mind and Bible instruction.

The reason is this: The Bible carries you back into the remote and hoary antiquity. Events shrouded in darkness, tossed backward and forward on the restless waves of conjecture, the theme of fabulous tales, stand before us in the Bible, clothed in perfect light, authentic, undeniable, the historic verities of the past. Then the Bible leads you forward on paths of prophecy, and paths of promise, and paths of revelation and of hope, where no cony's foot hath trodden, or eagle's eye hath glanced,—paths where no human strength can ascend the heights, or human wisdom can lead the way. It brings before you glory, honor, immortality. It reveals the infinitude of celestial joy and the darkness of endless despair. It shows you the fellowship of heaven, exalts you to communion with God, brings around you the society of angels, discloses to you the future recognition of the saints. It chases away the darkness in which a thousand problems of moral philosophy and social economy and personal obligation are involved. Questions of human rights and human duties; of the family, the school, the church, the state; questions as to education, business, politics, salvation; questions which have involved the world in interminable disputes, and which have perplexed a thousand anxious minds, are here solved. Thus it is that the Bible reveals to us the past, the future, and the unknown. It brings us into enchanted ground. The doctrine is authenticated by the miracle. The duty is enforced by wonders and by signs, the evident work of a divine power. God is moving before us in His majesty and strength. God is lifting the curtain which hides His ineffable glory. God is interposing in man's extremity, and making it the grandeur of His own opportunity. God is authenticating His truth by such stupendous movements, that none but the blind of mind and the reprobate of heart can refuse to believe. Young men, there is no sublimity like that of the Bible to rouse your thought; there is no information like that of the Bible to recompense your study; there are no angelic soarings of the

reason, the imagination, the memory, the affections, or the will, like those which you reach when you rise on the wings of Bible thought and Bible trust.

III. The Bible, as an educating power, *prepares young men for the responsibilities of the patriot*. Never, in the history of the world, were young men called upon to consider more solemn questions than those now presented. The love of country, rising above the dim and hazy mists of mercenary calculation; the love of freedom, exalted as the spirit that inspired the Scottish Covenanters and the Puritan Colonists; the love of man, a sentiment which, in its true grandeur and diffusiveness, is second only to the divine benevolence; the love of religion, an affection without which all other principles lack their vitalizing force,—these are the sentiments which alone can sustain the true Christian; these are the motives which will give energy and invincibility to the patriot. But these high and inspiring motives come only from the study of the Bible.

The Bible reveals the worth of the deathless soul, the capabilities of human nature, the interest of human life, and thus it dignifies all social and governmental relations. It exhibits man as the last and best creation of God, as purchased by the Redeemer's blood, as invited, notwithstanding his grievous and criminal apostasy, to return to the endearing relation of a child and the high prerogative of a king and a priest unto God. The Bible discloses the sacredness of law, the necessity of authority, the nature, the limitations, and the beneficent uses of government, and thus prepares young men for the exercise of loyalty, for the duties of the citizen, for the vast responsibilities which devolve upon them under republican forms. The Bible places the great doctrines of freedom and the inalienable nature of human rights upon the only immovable foundation, declaring the accountability of all men to the same great principles of equity and of duty. The Bible uproots selfishness, and prepares men for all that is genial, generous, sympathetic, hospitable, philanthropic. The Bible unfolds to us the relation between present choices and future character, between

time and eternity, and shows us how the humble and sincere performance of duty here will lead to ineffable and endless glories hereafter. Thus the Bible prepares young men for the obligations of patriotism. Ah, ye eager, aspiring, energetic youth, it is not in the conclave of politicians, nor in the controversies of the newspapers, nor in the volumes of Kent, Madison, Marshall, Webster, Story, Sumner, — that you are to learn the lessons of patriotic devotion and of sublime heroism, so much as with your open Bible, in long-continued meditation, and on your knees in prayer.

Probably no young man is fully aware of his vast and weighty responsibilities, as a citizen of this free land, in this critical hour, when all foundations are shaken. The triumphs of Liberty have been secured by incredible sacrifices and toils on the part of heroes who have died; but Liberty is still in peril. Young friends, if ever men needed to be panoplied with the armor of faith, on the right hand and on the left; if ever they needed a pentecostal baptism of love and a sound mind, of courage and a holy consecration, of spirituality that rises above time-serving views, and of righteous indignation which will consume away from the land the sins that infest our borders, you need that heavenly immersion now. The Bible, with its exalting doctrines, its pure precepts, its inspiring examples, its sustaining promises, its eternal sanctions, must be your strength.

Never, since the world was made, was there an hour more full of terrible things in judgment and in power, of wonderful things in wisdom and in love! A republic is to be saved; a nation is to be redeemed; false doctrines of government, perverse misconstructions of liberty and of right, are to be extinguished. God calls upon you to stand in your lot and do your duty. It is the hour and the power of Satan, of bewildering fallacies, of theories suicidal to states, murderous to souls, and offensive to God. You must meet them and suppress them with a wise and earnest mind. Patriotism and religion and manliness call you; all voices of love, and testimonies of faith, and principles of self-respect summon you.

Count not your life, nor any of the privileges of life, dear unto you, for you strike for the heavenly glory, you strike for the freedom of all the future ages. You need to fire the soul with indomitable ardor, to gird yourselves for achievement, to arouse every sympathy and hope and resolve. Believe me, youthful patriots, beloved and trusted, you cannot be equal to your duties without the study and love of the Bible. The missionary leaves home and friends, education and privileges, ease and comforts, the sweet sound of the church-going bell and the loved voices of song and prayer, that he may suffer, and, if God appoint, may prematurely die for heathen souls. You have dangers, toils, sufferings as great, and an aim of equal sublimity. You need the same spirit of apostolic zeal, of unflinching consecration, born of faith, nourished by Bible-food. There is in Boston Harbor a reef of rocks, a narrow, obscure, and hazardous strait, called "The Graves." There is in the harbor of New York a similar channel of peril and fear, called "Hell Gate." What should you think of the untaught, unthinking, reckless sailor, who should drive his hapless vessel, without a pilot, direct upon those rocks? His presumption would be small, compared to yours, if you attempt to navigate through the perils of this mortal life, without the guidance of God's infallible Word. You are already among the breakers, and you know not where the deep current leads. Storms are over your head; lightnings gleam; thunders reverberate; the tornado is saying, "Sail by the Bible, or you go down in the whelming waves; your souls are lost; and the Republic is a shattered wreck!"

THE DEATH OF THE CHRISTIAN.

[This sermon was preached in the John-street Church in July, 1870. To those who are bereaved in Dr. Foster's death, it comes as a voice from the grave to give them comfort.]

NUM. 23 : 10. — “*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*”

A GREAT and peculiar interest gathers around the death-bed of the Christian. Some of the most thrilling, searching, subduing appeals ever made to the consciences of men, suggesting to them their privilege, admonishing them of their duty, exhorting them to its performance, have been grounded upon these death-bed scenes. Here piety has been seen in its transcendent beauty, and Christ has manifested himself to the soul in His divine and adorable strength. Who does not draw near with reverent mien and throbbing heart to the couch of the patriarch Jacob, as he gathered his feet into his bed, and bestowed his blessing upon his sons, and with prophetic vision foretold their character and their fate? Who does not uncover his head and look on with moistened eye while Stephen, the first martyr, fainting under the murderous blows of his enemies, bends upon his tottering knees, with palms outspread in forgiving supplication, and with face shining like that of an angel, cries, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”? Who does not read the annals of other martyrs, the early and the later, and wonder and adore, while he marks their fortitude and faith in the dark hour of persecution, their forgiveness of their enemies, their devotion to Christ, and their calm and holy triumph when perishing in the flames? Who can read the story of Payson's death, or Evarts' death, without a quickened pulse

and the falling tear? They tarried for a season in the atmosphere and the light of Beulah,—they had visions of glory, and their example shows us what we may anticipate and enjoy, in some measure at least, if we are followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. I propose to consider some of the characteristics of the Christian's death, and,—

I. I notice some of those features which are common to him, with other men, and which render death an event to be dreaded. And,

II. Some of those peculiarities of his death, which make it a scene of triumph and of joy, and an event greatly to be desired.

There are *distressing features* accompanying even the Christian's death, which trouble the mind, and which cause us to shrink back with apprehension and dread.

1. The Christian's death is *not free from physical debility and pain*. Sickness entails upon him its accustomed sufferings,—faintness, languor, restlessness, distress. Faith will quiet his mental agitations, piety will soothe his spiritual anguish, the love of Christ will sustain his sinking soul, but it will not arrest the convulsions of expiring nature, nor mitigate the pangs of the dying strife. Death, in itself considered, is to all an event to be dreaded. We shrink from death with an instinctive and natural fear. We hold on to this mortal breath with a close and unyielding tenacity. All that a man hath will he give for his life. Death brings to all a great and fearful shock. It effects a total revolution and change in our mode of being. It quenches the vital spark,—that mysterious principle of life, which no human sagacity can explain, which no human power can kindle; that wonderful source of activity which keeps all the springs and wheels and varied and complex machinery of this mortal frame in play; that accompaniment, if not cause, of intellectual improvement and of genuine delights. The separation of soul from body cannot take place without more or less of reluctance and resistance, and even of agony. The agonies of the dying are in part ob-

vious to survivors, but in part they are not seen by us, they cannot be described to us, and they must remain incomprehensible to us, till we know for ourselves what it is to die. The pains of death have been portrayed in graphic terms, — the imagination of the poet has often wrought the scene into his most moving passages, — but the reality will go beyond all the pictures of fancy, and will impart to us views of the greatness and the wonderfulness of the change, of which we had known nothing before.

Now, the Christian, I repeat, has no right to anticipate deliverance from this pain. He may be calm in the sense of forgiven sin; he may cherish perfect trust in an Almighty Redeemer, so far as peace of mind can alleviate bodily anguish; he may look for exemption; his tranquillity of soul may enable him patiently to bear, and even triumphantly to forget, his sufferings; but the agonies of death are not remitted for his sake. Disease pales his cheek, exhausts his strength, wastes his frame, pierces him with pangs of keen distress, as in the case of other men.

2. The death of the Christian *is surrounded by the sorrow and pain of parting with beloved friends*. It sunderes the tenderest ties; it cuts off long-cherished and fondly-cherished associations; it arrests in their full flow a current of recollections and hopes and joys, which can be repeated no more on earth, and pours them back a reflux tide upon the aching heart, with force to drown us in floods of anguish; it wounds the deepest and purest sensibilities of our nature. The religion of Christ is here our only consolation. If we have known the joys of Gospel faith, if we have tasted the preciousness of immortal hopes, if we have given ourselves into the hands of Jesus, and have evidence that our friends are safe in the ark of the Lord, we can bear up under the anguish of separation, but the anguish itself is not diminished.

The Christian, as he has known the love of Christ, and has partaken of His Spirit, cherishes a more profound and unchanging affection for his fellow-men than others. He estimates the grandeur of mind, the worth of character, the

beauty of affection, by a new standard; he is prepared to enjoy the privileges and fulfil the duties of friendship; he admires the wisdom of God which is seen in man's social constitution and social relations; he acknowledges with devoutest gratitude the divine beneficence which has ordered our interdependence of interests, and our intermingling of sympathies, which has taken us from our isolated and solitary selfishness, and set us in families, and bound us to circles of kindred, and placed our happiness in the keeping of neighbors, and confederated us into states, and created obligations corresponding to our social connections, and made us to know how dear and how valuable are the claims of friendship and of love. The Christian adores that matchless grace which inspires the heart with kindness and generosity, and renders the fellowship of the holy, blissful and eternal. Religion renders no man sour, or morose, or misanthropic. It acts upon the Christian with a refining, humanizing power, softening that which is harsh, removing that which is selfish, and qualifying him to seek for the happiness of friends and to rejoice in their affection.

When such an one dies, the pangs of separation from beloved friends must be keen, and were it not for divine alleviations, the anguish of the last adieu would be unendurable. He is a Christian, and he leaves his friends with God,—this is his solace; he is a Christian, and he trusts that the dear friends whom he leaves behind will repent of sin and believe in Jesus, and that through His regenerating grace they will be made holy and prepared for Heaven; and therefore he anticipates a future meeting and blissful association with those from whom he is now parted,—this is his joy and strength. But, apart from these consolations, his last farewell is frequently the most sorrowful and affecting which earth can know. The death of the Christian may bring severe calamities upon dear survivors; the influence of the Christian is one which the world can but ill spare; his loss will produce a chasm in circles greatly bereaved, a vacuum in hearts desolate and bleeding; he may die in the prime of life, his labors suddenly

arrested, his plans of business unaccomplished, his hopes of comfort unfulfilled, the education of dear dependent ones broken off, and they may be left to meet adversity's frown, to pine in destitution, and to live on for months and years, bereft of privileges once theirs, deprived of joys which had been their treasure, in broken-hearted yet uncomplaining sadness. To leave them thus must strike a bitter pang to his heart, even while he bows submissively to the Divine will.

3. The death of the righteous *may be sudden and unexpected, and therefore painful*. No doubt the good man is less exposed to the sudden attack of violent disease than other men. He does not violate thoughtlessly and recklessly the rules of moderation; he does not live for the indulgence of appetite and the pleasures of sense; he does not throw the reins upon the neck of his passions and let them drive him the devious road to death; he does not rush rashly and without cause into circumstances of danger;—he exercises wisdom and forethought, and provides, so far as possible, for the peril which must arise. When disease, or pestilence, or casualty comes, he is not filled with dismay and torn with remorse and overwhelmed with forebodings, but he meets the danger calmly, believing in an overruling Providence, trusting in a merciful God, and is not agitated with excessive fears, nor disqualified from taking suitable precautions. And yet he is exposed to unforeseen and premature death. The shaft is often sped from an invisible bow, and no sagacity of his can ward off the inevitable stroke.

It is sometimes said that if the laws of life were understood and obeyed, all men, extraordinary accidents excepted, would live to old age, and die at last because life was worn out, and the alarming, fatal progress of diseases would be ended. There is ground enough, unquestionably, to reprove the excesses and the imprudence of men, and to deplore the prodigality with which life is thrown away. But it does not appear that any plan of wisdom has ever been devised, or can be devised, which will infallibly prolong the life of man. It does not appear that those whose sagacity has been most undeniable,

and whose precautions have been most abundant, and around whom favoring circumstances and providential helps have gathered most thickly, have obtained a certain guaranty of life. It does not appear that those who are so incredulous of a Divine providence, and who talk so much of the uniform laws of life, and of man's mastery over his own fate, are any more likely to live long, or live happily, than others.

God, for important moral ends, has made the life of all men uncertain. Brevity and insecurity are written on all our earthly possessions, on all hopes and joys which have for their basis a protracted life, and it is in vain for us to seek to alter that decree. God designs to teach us that this world is not fitted to be our abiding dwelling-place, that the gifts of this world are not fitted to feed the hunger of the immortal soul, but that we are called upon to seek a nobler and more enduring treasure. We have here no continuing city. Everything reminds us,—the passing hearse, the weekly record of mortality, the sicknesses which waste our strength, the bereavements which leave us alone, the baffled plans, the disappointments of life, the flower of spring withering ere noon, the glories of summer fading and gone, the autumn leaf, the desolations of winter,—that we, too, are passing away.

For some reasons, the earnest, devoted Christian is more liable to an early and sudden death than other men. He is called upon to perform the work which God assigns him, though at the cost of toil and weariness, of peril and self-sacrifice. He is to live for others, not for himself. He is not to count his life dear unto him, if he may glorify God by recommending His truth, and by winning souls to Christ. He has a higher end before him than length of days or personal ease. Duty requires him to wear out, if need be, or at any rate to allow no rust to gather upon his faculties. He is bound sometimes to meet exposures, to engage in strenuous labors, to endure distracting cares, to bear the burden of heavy responsibilities, where other men might hold themselves excused. David Brainerd and Henry Martyn, if they had lived for health, and consulted comfort, and restrained their zeal for

Christ and for souls, would in all human probability have doubled the length of their lives. The Christian, if faithful, may die somewhat earlier, and somewhat more suddenly, than the man who consults simply and only the teachings of medical science. Like Whitefield or Chalmers, he may strain the powers of mind and body to their utmost tension, so that the silver cord shall be snapped in a moment. But this does not prove that he has been unwise, or that his life has been thrown away. We are to measure our lives by deeds, not years.

“That life is long which answers life’s great end.”

4. The death of the Christian is *sometimes shrouded in spiritual darkness, and therefore painful*. It is not desirable that any should imagine that a death-bed scene furnishes the chief evidence of piety, and God may see fit to withhold from those whose lives have borne the most decided testimony to the power of His grace, this last attestation. We may cherish a strong desire to die in the exercise of a triumphant, overcoming faith, and in rapture of joy; but it is a privilege which has often been denied to eminent believers. Delirium may supervene and destroy all coherent thought and consciousness of approaching death. Weakness of body, and the distraction caused by pain, may prevent long-continued reflection and the deliberate, collected expressions which denote a full, unclouded triumph of the mind. When the mind has full possession of itself, and when the life has been distinguished for holiness, the death is not always triumphant. Such is the sense of personal unworthiness, and so lively is the remembrance of shortcomings, and so profound is the conviction of sin, that often all the anxious soul can do, is doubtingly to trust and tremblingly to hope. I know not that history records an instance of a consistent, praying Christian, brought to the hour of death, and then left to utter desolation, anguish, and despair. Death-beds of unspeakable horror have occurred, but they were not those of penitent believers in Christ. Sometimes the righteous die with heaven full in view, and with large and wonderful antepasts of its bliss in the soul; but more often

they have no elation of mind, no ecstatic joy, but renouncing self, their song is all of grace; letting go their hold of the world, they cling to the Redeemer's hand, and with a calm and humble trust, in unbroken serenity they await their change. Such a death-bed as this may not be all that we could desire for ourselves or for our friends; but to those who appreciate calm thoughts, simple faith, a composed and serious and tranquil frame, it is exceedingly gratifying and cause for profound thanksgiving. Contrast this death-bed with that of infidel philosophers in their most cheerful moods, and how far do the triumphs of faith exceed the attainments of human reason! Look at Hume, the cool, resolved skeptic. How puerile were his jests; how incongruous, his laughter; how clearly were his witticisms far-fetched and insincere; how labored his attempt to conceal the workings of a disturbed and anxious mind! Look at Mirabeau, the French atheist, the renowned orator, suddenly seized with death-pangs at his midnight revels, carried home in dreadful agony of body, and, with unnatural glee in the intervals of his spasms, exhorting his friends to flood his room with sunshine, to crown his head with flowers, to fill the apartment with perfumes, to surround him with songs of melody, and to let him die with these delights of sense engrossing his thoughts.

II. I come now to describe some *joyful characteristics*. The death of the righteous is to be desired, —

1. Because *it closes forever the conflict with sin*. This life is one constant struggle with spiritual foes, and the more holy the life, the more intense the conflict. There is a joy of victory which is deep and satisfying, more full of rapture than the joy of any placid, uneventful life, where no foes have been met, no battles fought, no triumphs won. There is a virtue, an energy, a holy steadfastness developed, in the case of him who has been tried and found faithful, who has met temptation and overcome it, who has been called to difficult duty and has accomplished it, not possible in one who has never passed through a similar ordeal. When the world has been vanquished and self has been subdued; when all the wiles of Satan, and

all the subtleties of error, and all the waywardness of the heart have been resisted, a lofty and intense joy results from that conscious victory. But so long as we mingle in the busy scenes of life, and are under these laws of probation, whatever victories are accomplished, the battle must again be fought, and the victory won again. We cannot lay our armor down, we cannot remit our vigilance and care, or sing the conqueror's song, until life is done, and the enemy is finally and forever defeated.

Now, whatever the joy of victory, it is a source of larger joy to know that the strife is ended, and the contest never can be renewed. And this is the Christian's joy in death. He can say with the exulting Paul, "I have fought the fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of joy which fadeth not away." He remembers the dangers through which he has passed; he trembles as he reviews the number and the magnitude of his perils; he renders thanks to God for his wonderful escapes; he adores that watchful Providence which has carried him through. His thoughts of wonder and admiration, and of gratitude, are heightened by the power of contrast. The day is more beautiful after the night; the sunshine is more pleasant after the storm; the sense of rest is enhanced by fatigue; the value of health is appreciated when recovering from sickness; —so the Christian, when drawing near to death, recalls the horrible pit and the miry clay; the weary path and the failing strength; the tumult of the steady fight; the subtlety and hatred of spiritual foes; the fierceness and terror of their blows; the by-paths into which he was liable to wander; the seducing voices which allured him away from duty; the Slough of Despond; the Doubting Castle; the Hill Difficulty; the bowers of ease; the lions in the path; the glozing tempters; the mocking fiends; — he remembers them all, and the wonderful deliverances vouchsafed to him by boundless grace. He stands on the Delectable Mountains, and heaven is in view. The past is a pledge for the future. He has a conscious sense of pardon. He is filled with peace and thankfulness and

joy. That God, who has guided him so long, will guard him still. That Saviour, who has succored him so long, will not forsake him now. If, amid all the disadvantages of this mortal life, he has come off conqueror, surely in another and purer world he shall be conqueror still, or rather he shall cease from strife and enjoy forever the fruits of victory. To die with such an assurance is ample recompense for all the toils which have been encountered, for all the anguish which has been endured.

2. The death of the Christian is to be desired, because *it brings to him enlargement of mind*. Here thought is feeble, the judgment is fallible, knowledge is limited, conjecture is substituted for accurate information, prejudice takes the place of calm reasoning, too often specious delusions are welcomed as if they were unchanging truths. In this state of mental darkness we all wander for a time, and unless our understanding has been illuminated by the Divine Spirit, and our hearts regenerated by Divine power, we stumble at noonday, and stumble on till death. Even those who study with candor and prayer, and who have been taught of God, are distressed by the incompetency of their minds and by the frequency of their mistakes. We have in the processes of reason, and the testimonies of conscience, and the Word of God, clear and full intimations of our duty and our privilege. And yet we are slow to learn and slow to love. Darkness hinders our perceptions of truth, faithlessness hinders our realization of privilege. We grope as in the twilight, we encounter innumerable surprises and difficulties, we find ourselves enveloped in mystery and doubt.

But death terminates all this. Often the Christian is conscious of a decided and rapid growth of knowledge as life draws to a close. The flesh faints and sense grows dim, but thought is roused, and the intellect waxes stronger and stronger. The lamp of life is feeble and low, and flickers in the socket, but the light of the soul comes out from its eclipse, breaks forth from the clouds, and is ascending, undeniably, like the rising sun, towards perfect day. What a pledge is

this of an immortal and blessed existence, of progress in knowledge, of victory and joy and strength!

3. The death of the Christian is greatly to be desired, because *it removes all hindrances to successful action*. How many impediments stand in the path of the regenerate, aspiring spirit here below! The world of matter around us, with its appeals to sense, with its pre-occupations of mind, with its absorbing power over the heart, is a darkening curtain between us and God, shutting out the face of our Redeemer and the light of heaven. These bodies are often a fetter upon the free spirit, chaining us down to inferior wants when we would fain rise to spiritual and improving contemplations, hanging like a clog upon the spirit, and holding us back in a lingering walk, when we desire to run the Christian race. How much of our time is seemingly wasted and lost; how much of it consumed in sleep; how much of it to recruit the feebleness of the exhausted frame; how much of it in the restlessness of protracted sickness; how much of it by those ten thousand trivialities and interruptions of this mortal life which cannot be avoided, which are a part of our discipline, but which will not trouble us in heaven. I refer not here to the indolence of mind, and the reluctance of spirit, and the predominant worldliness and unbelief which prove such a temptation and hindrance to the unrenewed, for I am speaking of the truly regenerate Christian. And yet even in his case, how often and how mournfully does sin obstruct his efforts and thwart his plans; how often does it draw him aside, with a marked and melancholy deflection, from the path of duty; how often does it retard him in his progress; how often is the Christian called to chide himself for remissness, inefficiency, failure; how often is he called to lament the coldness of his love, the weakness of his faith, the feebleness of his attainments! Like the imprisoned bird beating his wings against the bars of his cage, looking out upon the bright sun, the green fields, the free air, and longing to be enfranchised that he may stretch his wings at will,—the Christian feels the restrictions which gird him around and hedge him in; he looks

off from the mount of promise upon yonder land of liberty and of light, the Canaan of his love, and he yearns with an inexpressible desire to range those blessed fields. The late Professor Stuart was accustomed to say that he was able to study only three hours in the twenty-four. Three hours a day was all the time he could give to close, concentrated, severe application of mind, without bringing on permanent prostration of strength and debility of thought. If three hours a day are the limit of intellectual toil for such an eager and consecrated spirit as his, will it not be to such an emancipated soul a joy when he can study all the hours of the twenty-four, all the years of a long eternity?

4. The death of the righteous is to be desired, because it *introduces to the blessedness of heaven.*

What is heaven? It is the recognition of friends. Our social affections, if they are sanctified, become to us the sources of some of our most valuable and exquisite joys. A balm in sorrow here, a quickener in duty always, a guard against temptation, they are to be expanded, purified, and perfected hereafter. Tender and precious ties are sundered here, leaving memories which cannot be forgotten, and an aching void in the heart which will not cease to bleed, but the riven fellowship shall be restored.

What is heaven? It is not only the recognition of departed friends, but it is an introduction to all the saints. Then shall we talk with Abel and Enoch and Noah; with Miriam and Hannah and Ruth; with Peter and Paul; with Luther and Calvin and Edwards; with Davies and Brainerd and Dwight. And then, too, shall we talk with those little children whom we have loved, whose names are not emblazoned on earth's history, but are written high on heaven's page. Did not David mourn for his babe with an anguish which for many days and nights could not be comforted? Did not the Shunamite woman, lamenting for her dead boy with a heart full of unutterable emotion, still exclaim, It is well with the child? Did not Luther sit in speechless sorrow over the coffin of his babe? Did not Thomas Scott bury his heart in the grave of

his little girl? Did not Leigh Richmond, in a flood of tears, lay the lad whom he had given up to God, beneath the sod? Did not all these mothers and fathers, after looking their last upon the dear child of their affections, hide thenceforward an undying memory in their hearts, and carry a silent grief in their bosoms, down to their own grave? Their hopes were broken; their joys were quenched; their plans of holiest sympathy and tenderest co-operation in this weary pilgrimage were baffled,—how great the vacancy, how deep the sorrow, on account of the loss of the child, it were vain to attempt to tell. It will be a pleasure to see those children, and take them by the hand, and hear them tell their story of redemption.

Heaven has some pleasures which earth can only dream of. Heaven is not a shadow nor a vapor; it is the genuine excellence of earth perfected. Our rational human faculties will then be cultivated to a higher tone, and our pure and gentle human sensibilities will then be strengthened. No lofty thought, no generous affection, will be exterminated. It will be a scene of renewed acquaintance, of mutual converse, mutual instruction, mutual love, and thus our enjoyments will be exalted and made eternal.

What is heaven? It is communion with Christ. Let it not be forgotten, when we refer to the joy which will result from the recognition of friends, that there is a joy more exalted and more ecstatic even than this. It will be the chief happiness of the redeemed saint to meet his redeeming Lord. Before the unveiled brightness of the throne of God, the soul just released from earth could hardly stand. The transcendent glory would occasion a surprise which finite powers could not bear. It would be too great a contrast, to pass from the dimness of earth to the splendors of the throne, from the imperfections of this mortal state to the ineffable wonders and grandeurs. Angels, therefore, meet the soul on the border as willing convoys to the throne. There, on that throne, sits the Lamb once slain, and the ransomed spirit meets a brother; there is a silvery cloud over the insufferable brightness; there is a human tone in that welcoming voice; there is the

print of thorns on that august brow; there is a softening of the indescribable majesty, else would the trembling soul shrink back, saying, It is a sublimity more than I can bear, it is a contrast which astounds and overwhelms. Here, in the welcome of Christ, the whisper of redeeming love mingles with the grandeur of universal authority and omnipotent power, and thus the wonders of divinity are accommodated to the feebleness of humanity. Thus are we to be introduced to the presence of God. Here we see Him through a glass darkly, — there shall we be folded in His very embrace; here our eye is dim, — there, with open and clarified vision, every film removed, every obstruction taken away, shall we look upon the face of the Infinite. In this world, under the weight of these incumbances and disabilities, the sight of God is sometimes overpowering, as when Moses was hid in the cleft of the rock, or Elijah stood in the mouth of the cave; as when Peter beheld his Lord on the mount of transfiguration, or John on the lone isle of Patmos, or Edwards walking in the fields, or Payson launching on the shoreward waves of the eternal sea of bliss. But O! to see Him as He is, with the intellect and heart and will prepared, lifted up upon the atmosphere of heaven, illuminated by the light which shines in that centre of all effulgence; to see and comprehend the adorable Trinity, which Melancthon spoke of as one of his most cherished anticipations; to see Him whom, not having seen, we love, — in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, — to see Him thus, and partake of His love, will be bliss indeed. Thus will the solitude of earth be lost in celestial society; thus will the decay of the body be swallowed up in eternal victory; thus will the sting of sin and death be taken away. And this is the felicity into which the Christian enters at death. "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
Academies in comparison with high schools,	41	Bible in the schools,	376
Accidents,	98	attractive to the scholar,	426
Actresses,	170	educating power, an	417
Adam's sin, our relations to	179	mental stimulus of	425
Adams, Rev. Dr. E. E.	126	revelations of	427
Pres. John	279	source of literature, the	293
Pres. John Quincy	212, 279	supernatural element in	426
Rev. Dr. Nehemiah	103	trains for patriotic duties,	428
Address at Dartmouth College,	93	Birth of boy announced,	60
by Ex-Governor Bullock,	126	Biography,	296
Afflictions,	197	charms of	182
uses of	221	of good men,	193
Agassiz, Louis	384	religious	88, 91, 217
Age, changes produced by	17	Blaine, James G.	195
peculiarities of the	170	his eulogy of Garfield,	227
Age, old	311	Blanchard, Rev. Dr. Amos	48, 70, 164, 190
autumn a symbol of	96	Blessedness of the ministry,	45, 51, 120, 184
joy of	108	Boarding one's self in college,	28
beauty of	408	Books, influence of certain	302, 425
not always to be secured,	435	read by great men,	253
Aims in life	136	list of, to read,	60, 160, 233
Alexander, Rev. Dr. Archibald	198	of power,	425
Prof. J. Addison	341	Bouton, Rev. Dr.	48, 81
Alford, Henry, Dean of Canterbury,	186	Braddock, Gen. E.	366
Allen, Dr. Nathan	190	Breckenridge, Drs. Robt. and Wm.	51
Andover Theological Seminary,	37, 59, 228	Brook, description of a	178
Appeals to the impenitent,	47, 75, 171	Brooks, A. L.	153, 171, 202
Assembly, General, of Presbyterian Church,	50	Rev. Dr. Phillips	214
Association, Ministerial	159	Preston A.	71
Assurance of hope,	123, 133	Brother, influence of a	22, 23
Atlantic Cable,	89	Brown, John	174
Authority of the preacher's message,	342	raid of	72
Autumn, a symbol of old age,	96	Bryant's Thanatopsis,	228
Bacon's Essays,	302	Buchanan, Pres. James	212
Bagg, J. Newton, letter from	141	Budgett, Samuel	192
Barnes, Rev. Albert	244, 341, 408	Bullock, Ex-Governor	126
Barrett, Hon. James	34	Burnell, K. A.	149
letters from	34, 94	Burroughs, Rev. Dr. Eden	13
Barrows, Rev. Dr. C. D.	222	Butler, Benjamin F.	195
Bartlett, Rev. Dr. S. C.	192	Cable, Atlantic	89
letter from	27	Calhoun, John C.	302
Beecher, Rev. Henry Ward	103, 165, 354	Cattle, selling	20
his first book	302	Centennial Exhibition,	422
Rev. Dr. Lyman	81, 149, 341, 405	Chalmers, courage of Dr.	264
Berkeley, Bishop	256	Change of pastorate,	55
Berry, Rev. Augustus, letter from	63	a modern necessity,	164
Berzelius,	284	Changes produced by age,	17
Bible-class, how conducted,	25	Channing, Rev. Dr. Ellery	278
		Character, Christian nobility of	88

	PAGE		PAGE
Chase, Chief-justice Salmon P.	127	Darwinianism,	385
Cheney Brothers,	192	Daughter, comfort in a	87, 132
Child, Hon. Linus	190	Davy, Sir Humphrey	290
Rev. Dr. Willard	70	Day, Rev. Pliny B.	49
Children of Richard and Irene B.		Day, Pres. Jeremiah	155
Foster,	16, 17	Dead, the eminent	172
government of	247	Death,	98
in heaven,	442	Christian's calmness in	438
loss of little	442	enlargement of mind in	440
training of	46	dread of	432
Childs, Mrs. Horace, letter from	42	hindrances removed at	441
Choate, Hon. Rufus		of the Christian,	431
36, 126, 174, 204, 233,	327	of a child,	61, 83
Choice of the ministry as a profes-	29, 110	of an adult daughter,	138
sion,		pain of	432
Christ, comfort from	87, 228, 230	preparations for	88
in heaven,	443	spiritual darkness in	437
our light through	245	sudden	78, 435
Christian, death of	421	Debating club,	18, 63
friendships of	433	Democratic party,	174
Church in God's care,	102	Dewey, Nathaniel Wright	30, 34, 77, 193
building, an ancient	58	Dickens, Charles	186, 198
one in a place,	70	Dignity of the ministry,	44
sources of prosperity in a	122	Discoveries in theology,	340
work,	52	Doctor of divinity, title of	103
Church, Rev. John H.	56, 58	Doddridge, Philip	366
Churches, Congregational, in Lowell,	70	Dogmatism in the pulpit,	332
City, disadvantages of pastorate in	102	Doubt in young men,	244
Clark, Rev. DeWitt S.	216, 251	in religion,	405
Rev. James F.	171	Duryea, Rev. Dr. Joseph T.	214
Cleaveland, Rev. Dr. J. P.	70	Duties of a minister outside his	
College, addresses at	36, 93, 271, 327	church,	68, 70
boarding one's self in	28	Dwight, Rev. Dr. Timothy	155, 405
commencements,	36, 126, 181		
Dartmouth	10, 13, 25, 36, 126	Earle, Rev. A. B.	150
friendships in	30, 34	East Burke, Vt.	176
life in	26, 36	Eaton, Rev. J. M. R.	72
Williams	103	Eccentricity undesirable,	387
Columbus, O., Congregational Church		Education under difficulties,	190
in	80	Edwards, Prof. Bela B.	83
Commencement at Dartmouth Col-		Effort to win souls,	171
lege,	126	Eliot, George	198
Communion with Christ in heaven,	443	Elocutionary practice,	42
Communists in France,	370	Eloquence of expiring nations, 33, 36, 271	
Congregational Churches in Lowell,	70	England, prosperity of	420
Conkling, Senator	195, 217, 218	Enlistments in the army, securing	115
Consecutiveness of thought	332	Emerson, R. W.	302
Convention of Y. M. C. A.,	149	Erskine, Lord Thomas	278
Conversation,	306	Evangelists,	126, 150, 165
value of	359	Events of 1868,	144
of Christians,	394	review of current	195
Conversion of a young man,	122	Everett's orations,	33
Cooper's Novels,	119	Evils of the ministry,	29
1 Corinthians 1:21,	327	Evolution,	385
Correspondence, neglect in	163	Ex-pastors and pastor, relations of	221
Corwin, Hon. Thomas	216	Exercise, injury of excessive	130
Council, Church	155	Exodus 2:9,	276
at Washington, D. C.,	127	Extempore preaching,	117
Cowper, William	14, 284		
Coquetry, ministerial	77	Fable of squirrels,	135
Cox, Rev. Dr. S. H.	49	Faculty of originating thought,	99
Credentials of ministers,	54	Fairbanks Brothers,	192
Cuba, annexation of	380	Fairfax, Sir Thomas	225
Culture, from books,	305	Faith, power of	328
Christian, methods of	389	gives peace,	412
Cure of intemperance,	320	in God important to a nation,	371
		Family religion,	46
Dancing,	161	Farm life,	19
Dartmouth College,	10, 13, 25, 36, 126	Fast, a church	122
address at	93	Father, devotion of, to a son,	163

	PAGE
Father, loss of a	143
Fear of man,	67
Fellowship, Christian, advantages of	392
in heaven,	442
Field, Rev. Dr. H. M.	105
Finney, Prof. Charles G.	126
Fisher, Rev. Caleb E.	159
Fishing,	145, 151, 152
Football,	26
Foster, Rev. Dr. Eden B. :	

CHARACTERISTICS.

affections,	247
aim, singleness of	200
brothers, interest in his	45, 47, 59
brothers, influence on his	253
candor,	258
charity,	223, 247
children, anxiety for his	46
children, love for his	84, 85, 198
church, love for his	
52, 75, 112, 193, 203, 220	
conversation, powers in	259
courage,	264
dependence on his people,	75, 76
devotion to principle,	256
eloquence,	267
emotional nature,	223
energy,	246
error, fear of	215
family, love for	133, 135, 247
father, relations to his	143
fishing, love for	151, 152
flowers, love for	214, 229
gardening, interest in	
44, 128, 158, 214	
greatness,	263
his aim,	200
home, love for	49
honor as a minister,	241
humility,	43, 94, 226, 246, 255
humor,	259
ill health,	146, 206, 209
John-street Church, love for	
112, 193, 203, 220	
John-street Church, relations to	201
kindness to brother-ministers,	260
knowledge of civil war,	142
knowledge of men,	205, 224
labor, genius for	266
ministry, love for	45, 209
nature, interest in	
96, 107, 151, 218, 229	
pear-culture, interest in	129
parents, love for his	59
piety,	248, 256
physical activity,	23
politics, interest in	43, 71, 242
self-distrust,	246, 254
sensationalism, freedom from	200
singleness of aim	200
slavery, efforts against	43, 63, 243
son, relations to his	143, 145, 163
souls, longings for	47
spirituality,	389
style,	204, 256
sympathy,	220, 224
temperance, interest in	69, 243
unction,	225, 240, 403
unselfishness,	241

	PAGE
young men, interest in	45, 110, 216, 244

EVENTS IN HIS LIFE.

address at graduation,	33, 36, 271
address at Dartmouth College,	
93, 227	
Andover, student at	37
associate pastor, receives an	188
associate pastor, relations to	
186, 188, 221	
birth,	10
boyhood,	17
Brooklyn, N. Y., invitation to	78
children, his	41, 60, 83
college days,	25-36
Columbus, O., invitation to	80
conversion,	25
Dartmouth, commencement at	126
death, his	230
death of his daughter Emily,	138
devotional habits,	38
dislocation of his arm,	117
doctor of divinity, made	103
East Burke, Vt., vacation at	176
elocution, practice in	42
engaged to be married,	38, 39
football, fondness for	26
friendships in college,	30, 34
funeral service,	251
graduating address,	33, 36, 271
grief at giving up his work,	210
Henniker, passtrate at	40-54, 215
home, early	17
ill health at Lowell,	
146, 185, 187, 189, 206, 209	
illness at college,	26, 33
invitations to different churches,	40,
57, 62, 64, 78, 80, 100, 102, 117, 118, 140	
Jersey City, vacation at	193
Lawrence, call to	62
Lowell, first pastorate in	64-102
Lowell, second pastorate in	142-205
marriage,	40
Northampton, invitation to	98
parentage,	11
pastor emeritus at Lowell,	205-231
Pelham, pastorate at	54-64, 215
Philadelphia, invitations to	78, 117
physicians, friendship for	226
preparation for college,	25, 33
preparation for death, his	88
promise, early	22, 24
recreations in boyhood,	18, 20
remembrances on his birth-day,	215
resignation of pastorates,	
100, 140, 201	
revivals in his churches,	53, 81, 120
St. Johnsbury, invitation to	57
Saratoga, at	48, 125
scholarship in college,	25, 26
sickness, last	227
sing, learning to	36
slavery, early efforts against	43, 63
success in Lowell,	79
support, moral, of his people,	75
teacher in Sabbath School,	28, 32
teacher at Putney, Vt.,	28
teacher at Pembroke, N. H.,	36
teacher at Concord, N. H.,	36

	PAGE		PAGE
temperance address, making	38	Greatness, true	364
vacation of six months,	175	Greeley, Hon. Horace	11, 174
vacation, year of	189, 191, 192	Greene, Rev. Dr. J. M., memorial	262
war, civil, influence in	115	address of	262
Washington, D. C., at	49, 127	Griffin, Rev. Dr. E. D.	126, 334, 405
West Springfield, pastorate at	102-142, 215	Guizot,	212
		Guthrie, Rev. Dr. Thomas	354
HIS PROFESSIONAL AND LITERARY WORK.		Hale, Rev. Dr. E. E.	213
efforts for souls,	47, 75, 220	Hall, Rev. Dr. John	214
extra-parochial work,	68, 155, 248	Rev. Robert	285
inquiry meetings,	74	Hamilton, Sir William	302
labors in the ministry,	42, 53, 66, 67, 95, 99, 109, 148, 149, 175, 185, 239	Hammond, Rev. E. P.	126
letter-writing, methods of	163, 235	Hanks, Rev. S. W.	65, 251
literary tastes,	232	Hanover, N. H., description of	10
newspaper articles,	68, 69	Happiness in the Christian life,	133
newspaper-clippings,	179, 227, 235	Harvard, John	302
public efforts, his chief	248	Hawks, Rev. Dr. Theron H.	105
published sermons and address-		Hayes, Pres. R. B.	212
es, his	250	Health as affected by alcohol,	317
reading, biographical,	88, 198, 216	duty of having	131
reading, books for	38, 59, 146, 198	ill, in early life,	155
reading, habits of	232	relation of the mind to	86
reading, philosophical,	148, 210	Heaven, children in	442
sermons at installations,	66, 155	communion with Christ in	443
sermons on temperance,	69	fellowship of saints in	442
sermonizing, method of	98, 224, 230	hope of	89
sermon criticized,	159	nature of	442
Foster family, the:		Hedge, Prof. F. H.	171, 184
Rev. Eden B.	(See above)	Henniker, N. H., described,	40, 41
Rev. W. C.	16, 121	Henry, Patrick	366
Capt. Daniel	16, 127	education of	278
Sarah	16, 228	Heredity, influence of	177
Major Charles	16, 127	High-schools vs. academies,	41
Rev. Davis	16, 22, 228	History,	294
Rev. Roswell	16	Hodge's Theology,	216
Rev. R. Baxter	16, 23, 127	Holiness in the life,	396, 414
Edward	61	Holt, Dr. Daniel	226
Rev. Amos	17, 24, 254	Holmes, Rev. John Milton	193
Bela E.	83	Holy Ghost, influence of	398
Charles A. D. birth of	60	Home, joys of	49
Edward P. death of	61	love for	85
Emily E.	41, 84, 131, 138	made attractive,	309
Mrs. Irene B.	13, 16	study,	190
Richard	11, 143	the Christian, sermons on	148
Foster, John	285	Homer, Rev. Bradford	193
France in 1873,	369, 377	Hopkins, Pres. Mark	103, 154, 182
Franklin, Benjamin	302	Rev. Dr. Samuel	105, 162
Free-thinking, immorality of	188	House, purchase of a	147
Friends, loss of	139	Howard, Gen. O. O.	149
Friendships of the Christian,	433	Hunting adventure,	21
		Huntingdon, Lady, and her friends,	132
Garfield, Pres. James A.	212, 227	Ide, Rev. Dr.	155
assassination of	218, 219	Idling in vacation,	89
Garden at Lowell,	158	Illustrative power of great men,	354
at West Springfield,	128	Imagination, appeals to the	281
Garland, Dr. George W.	131, 138	Immersion, discussions on	150
Garrison, William Lloyd	73, 174	Immorality of free-thinkers,	188
General Assembly of Presbyterian Church,	49	Independence in the minister,	68
Genius,	353	of thought,	337
German writers,	184	Infidel speculations,	387
Gladstone, Hon. William E.	212, 267	Infidelity, causes of	398
Goodwin, Rev. Dr. E. P.	184	Inquiry-meetings,	74
Goodell, Rev. Dr. William	198	Installation sermons,	66, 155
Gossip,	222	Insincerity in the pulpit denied,	213
Graham, Mrs. Isabella	198	Intellect ruined by alcohol,	324
Grant, Pres. U. S.	174, 212	Irring, Washington	193, 288
		Isaiah 48: 18,	403
		Italy from 1848 to 1874,	374

	PAGE		PAGE
Jersey City, impressions of	193	Light from a good man,	252
John 5:35,	251	Lincoln, Pres. Abraham	212
John-street Congregational Church,		election of	97, 175
Lowell,	65, 187	nomination of	367
Johnson, Pres. Andrew	212	Lists of biographies,	217, 234
Jude 20:21,	389	Living theology, a, the orator's	
		power	93, 227
Kansas, troubles in	71	Loneliness,	133
Kimball Union Academy,	25	Lord, Rev. John	193
Kingsley, Rev. Charles	171	Lord, Pres. Nathan	54, 55, 67, 134
		letter from	54
Labor and capital, relations of	192	Love for family,	91, 133
mental	266	for home,	85
value of	353	of a pastor for his people,	203
Lathrop, Rev. Dr. Joseph	105	power of	196
Laymen, religious addresses of	149	parental	85
Lawrence, Mass., Central Church in	62	to Christ,	123
Lectures at Teachers' Institutes,	119	towards God,	339
Lecture, power of the	359	Lowell, Mass., calls to	62, 140
Letter to a little child,	92	Congregational Churches in	70
Letter-writing,	84, 85, 235	description of	65, 389, 401
on Sunday,	87	first pastorate in	64-102
Letters concerning E. B. Foster: From		second pastorate in	142-205
Bagg, J. Newton	141	John-street Church in	65, 187
Barrett, Hon. James	34, 94	pastors in	70, 259
Bartlett, Pres. S. C.	27		
Berry, Rev. Augustus	63	Macaulay,	193
Childs, Mrs. Horace	42	Trevelyan's life of	227
Foster, Rev. Davis	22	Machinery, influence on mind,	303
Foster, Rev. R. Baxter	23	Maine, temperance in	322
Lord, Pres. Nathan	54	Mann, Horace, as a worker,	267
Lowell parishioner, a	199	Manning, Rev. Dr. Jacob	214
Seabury, Rev. J. B.	222	Martineau, Rev. James	170
Stevens, Hon. George	203	Massachusetts and Maine, character	
Letters of E. B. Foster: To		of	223
his brothers,	40, 45, 47, 59	Maurice, Rev. J. F. D.	170
a class-mate,	144	Memory, instances of	158
a cousin,	17, 18	Merrimac River, the	58, 404, 406
his youngest daughter,	91, 151, 176,	Mill, John Stuart	384
177, 179, 190, 193, 195, 198, 209, 214, 215,		Millerism,	53
217, 218, 219, 233, 236.		Mind, bent of the	205
Dewey, N. Wright	31	Ministers competing with the press,	369
his daughter Emily,	33, 68, 82, 85, 86,	dissatisfaction with	162
87, 88, 93, 106, 127, 131, 132, 133.		lives of	9
a friend,	190	meetings,	70, 159
John-street Church,	201, 229	Ministry, ability of the modern	212
ministers,	186, 214, 245	amount of work in	239
a nephew,	236	blessedness of	45, 51, 120, 209
his parents,	15, 59, 60, 61, 66, 71, 80, 108	call to	111
his parishioners,	75, 102, 112, 171,	choice of	29
179, 189, 206, 207, 220.		consecration in	241
representatives of churches,	78, 79	coquetry in	77
his sister,	37	dignity of	44
his son,	67, 69, 72, 89, 95, 96, 97, 100,	ethics of	102
101, 103, 106, 115, 116, 117, 121, 122, 123,		evils in	29
124, 126, 129, 130, 138, 145, 148, 149, 154,		extra-parochial work in	69
155, 162, 163, 166, 170, 175, 176, 178, 181,		grumbling in	204
182, 185, 187, 188, 191, 192, 209, 210, 212,		honor in	241
213, 219, 235, 239, 241, 243, 244.		independence in	68
those out of Christ,	47, 75, 171	needs the moral support of the	
his uncle,	24, 28	people,	75
his wife,	46, 48, 49, 51, 55, 56, 85, 89,	no insincerity in	213
104, 121, 126, 167, 193.		pain of being laid aside from	210
young men,	110	political responsibility of	242
Liberalism,	215	power in, through Christ,	245
dangerous,	375	responsibility of	45, 56, 184
License or prohibition,	217	sacrifices in	111
Life compared to a stream,	90, 133	troubles in	161
reflections on	38, 95	youth in	163
uncertainty of	436	Mitchel, Gen. O. M.	116

	PAGE		PAGE
Moderate drinking,	313	Press, minister competing with the	369
Moose Mountain,	10, 18, 20, 21, 176	Prisoners of hope,	168
Morris, William	183	Progress in theology,	340
Murray, W. H. H.	152, 161, 171	Prohibition,	217, 321
Mystery of the sea,	409	Prosperity, from the Bible,	417
of religion,	410	of England and America,	420
Naming a child,	61	Providence, in men's lives,	366
Needs of the republic,	429	Psalm 119: 9,	417
Netherlands, courage of the	377	143: 5, 10	369
Nettleton, the evangelist,	126	Pulpit, use of the	70
Newspapers, estimate of	195, 298	rights of the	71
clippings from	227, 234	sources of power in	327
New-year's sermon,	172	Puritans, love among the	219
New York and New England, one-			
ness of	195	Rangeley Lakes, the	182
Novel reading,	298	Rationalism in religion,	219
		Read, what to	59
Object lessons, importance of	276	Reading,	59, 88, 132, 146, 292, 312
Ocean, the	151	advantages of	303
scenery of	145	dangerous	300
Oneness of New York and New		in the home,	308
England,	195	in old age,	310
Original sin,	177	its departments,	293
Originating thought, power of	99	methods of	232
Overwork,	99	topics of	179, 182
		philosophical	148
Pacific Mills, Lawrence, Mass.,	192	universality of	292
Parental love,	84	Reasoning, religious	123
Parishioners' influence on pastor's		Rebuke of evils,	161
usefulness,	75, 76	Repairs of a church,	162
Pastoral calls,	74, 114	Republic, needs of the	429
Pastorate in city or country,	102	Responsibilities of ministry,	45, 56, 184
pain of terminating a	100, 101	of the age,	406
seeking a	55, 56, 57, 102	of Christians,	413
Pastors in Lowell,	70, 259	of citizens,	429
in West Springfield,	105	Review of current events,	195
Patience in the preacher,	347	of the year 1873,	369
Patriotism, demands of	430	Reviews,	299
Peace of God,	404	Revision of the New Testament,	218
Pear culture,	129	Revivalists,	126, 150, 165
trees,	158	Revival at Concord, N. H.,	48
Pelham, N. H., described,	57	Henniker, N. H.,	53
Pembroke Academy,	36, 39, 45	John-street Church, Lowell,	81, 165
Pemberton Mills disaster,	98	West Springfield,	120
Pen paralysis,	100	methods in	121
Phelps, Prof. Austin	214	systematic visitation in	121
Philosophy,	210	church fast in	122
books in religious	146, 148	subjects of sermons in	122
reading in	301	River, description of a	90
Phillips, Hon. Wendell	73, 194	Robertson, Rev. F. W.	214
Phi Beta Kappa Society,	26	Robinson, Rev. Dr. Edward	112
Pierce, Pres. Frank	52, 72, 212	Ruin of the intellect from alcohol,	324
Pinneo, Dea. Oramel	40	Rum selling,	315
Pleasures of study,	37	Ruskin, Beauties of	90
Poetry,	296	Russia,	195
Political sermons,	71		
Politicians, methods of	352	Sabbath in France,	371
Potter, Rev. J. D.	165, 167	political importance of	371
Power in the pulpit, sources of	327	Observance of	87, 370
Prayer, public	240	Sabbath-school,	190
meetings, value of	194	commemorative service of	262
Preaching, criticisms of	131	Saints of God,	193
influence of	32	Salaries of country ministers,	59
to a few,	183	Salt, Sir Titus	192
to a new congregation,	164	Salvation, joy of	122, 132
old truths,	389	the great	148
Presidential contest,	90	2 Sam. 3: 33,	350
Presidents of the United States,	212	Saratoga Springs,	48, 125, 156
Press, influence of the	307	Scenery, descriptions of	
		85, 89, 90, 153, 167, 176, 178, 180	

	PAGE		PAGE
Scenery, influence of	134	Suffering, advantages of	88
Scholar, the dull	36, 119, 276	Sumner, Hon. Charles	172, 350
Scott, Rev. Dr. Thomas	291	as a lecturer,	350
Walter	186, 366	assault on	71
Gen. Winfield	259	his rupture with the republican	173
Seabury, Rev. J. B.	184, 186, 221	party,	105
letter from	222	"Sunny-side" experience,	178
Secret societies,	161	Sunrise, description of a	220
Sensationalism in the pulpit,	340, 344	Superintendent of Sabbath-school,	193
Separation from friends,	433	Swain, Rev. Dr. Leonard	377
Sermon writing, success in	160	Switzerland, school system of	164
Sermons, choice volumes of	109	Taine's English Literature,	161
courses of	172	Talmage, Rev. Dr. T. DeWitt	112, 288
for New-year,	122	Taylor, Dr. Nathaniel	354
in revivals,	66	Jeremy	214
installation	95, 236	Rev. Dr. William M.	119
methods of preparing	69, 185	Teachers' Institutes,	149, 243, 313, 326
on temperance,	66, 68, 98	Temperance,	52
plans of	238	labors for, in the church,	315
preaching old	71	woman's work in	198
political	109, 110	Thackeray,	170
series of	99	Theatres,	209
standard of	66, 67, 88, 95, 98, 109, 110,	Theology, delight of	340
subjects of	122, 144, 145, 148, 160, 184, 185	discourses on	335
subjects of series of	66 67, 109, 110, 148, 192	interest of	93
texts of	64, 67, 98	the orator's power,	340
to young men,	109	progress in	81, 128, 161
to young people,	66	Thompson, Rev. Dr. J. P.	332
Sermonizing, methods in	236	Thought, in the preacher, consec-	337
interest in	98	utive	292
standard of	97	independent	92
Seward, Secretary	297	1 Timothy 4:13,	70
Shakespeare,	341	Tortoise, eggs of	90
Simplicity of aim and style,	435	Towne, Rev. Joseph H.	161
Sickness not to be escaped,	438	Towns on the Albany Railroad,	345
Sin, victory over	37	Troubles in the ministry,	196
Sing, learning to	36	Truth, loyalty to	381
Singing in the family,	160, 170	Turkey,	91
Skepticism,	215	in 1873,	212
of the age.	136	Tyler, Rev. Dr. Bennet	102, 183
Skiouri, the squirrel,	43	Fres. John	
Slavery,	50	Tyng, Rev. Dr. S. H.	
desolation produced by	50	Uncertainty of life,	433
weak argument for	170	United service in Lowell,	70
Smiley, Miss Sarah F.	154	United States, prosperity of	420
Smith, Pres. A. D.	121	Vacation, how to spend	89, 183
Rev. Moses	17	Van Lenep, Mrs.	198
Social gatherings of young people,	47, 74	Verne, Jules	183
Souls, efforts for	125	Victory over sin,	438
Southworth, Deacon Edward	378	Virgilius, seizure of the	378
Spain in 1873,	105	War to be avoided,	379
Sprague, Rev. Dr. W. B.	78	War, the Civil	115
Spencer, Rev. Dr. I. S.	102, 164	apprehension of	97
Spring, Rev. Dr. Gardiner	116	religious dangers of	375
Squirrels, fable of	203	its influence on choice of presi-	212
Stearns, Frazer, life of	70	dents,	226
Stevens, Hon. George, letter from	251	Warner, Dr. F. A.	216
Street, Rev. Dr. Owen	81	Warren, Rev. William H.	169
funeral address of	164	Washington, Mount	127
Storrs, Rev. Dr. Henry M.	112, 161	D. C., first church in	302, 366
Rev. Dr. R. S.	220, 341	George	282
Rev. Dr. R. S., jr.	86	Watt, James	162, 405
Stuart, Prof. Moses	96	Wayland, Rev. Dr. Francis	264
Study, advantages of	66, 67, 88, 95, 98,	Wellington, courage of the Duke of	146
Student-life, privilege of	109, 110, 144, 145, 148, 160, 184, 185	Wedding party, a	64, 160, 174, 278
Subjects of sermons,	122	Webster, Hon. Daniel	
in a revival,			

	PAGE		PAGE
West Springfield, church in	190	Woman, her work in temperance,	315
described	104	Women, eminent Christian	132
pastors in	105	of the Bible,	110
pastorate in	102	Wood, Rev. Dr. A. A.	108
Wetherbee, Dea. Asa	112	Wordsworth's Ode to Immortality,	228
White, Hon. Joseph	119, 190	Wright, Rev. Royal N.	31
Whitefield, death of	408		
White Mountains, scenery in 167, 169, 180	137	York, Me., scenery at	144, 151, 153
journey among	149	Young men,	163, 244
Wilson, Hon. Henry	299	debating clubs of	18
his reading,	96, 103	labors of	19
Williams College,	212	Men's Christian Association,*	149
Winthrop, Gov. John	302	Convention of	66
Wirt, William	170	Young people, series of sermons to	17
Woman,	213	social gatherings of	366
her character and mission,	68, 95	Youth, influence with	
sermon on			



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